BUSINESS / B1 NEWS / A2 OPINION / A11 WORLD / A19

Fischer, chess genius, dies in Iceland; 64

KEFLAVIK, ICELAND—BOBBY FISCHER, once dubbed the "Mozart of Chess" and whose tortured genius earned him near-lovable notoriety and disdain, has died of illness in Iceland, a close friend said Friday.

Fischer was aged 64—a number that, by some oddity noted, corresponded to the number of squares on the chessboard.

Fischer spokesperson Gardar Sverris-

FISCHER A4

World Bank investment unit to quadruple loans to RP

Plunder in Bulacan: Ex-cronies rat on ex-mayor

Between Deadlines: Eruptions were on the menu when ex-President came to PDI

Clinton holds narrow 5-pt lead on Obama in Nevada

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Saturday, January 19, 2008 ★★ Vol. 22 | No. 41 www.inquirer.net

8 RP seafarers receive P30-M reward from US

By Tarra Quismundo

EIGHT FILIPINO SEAMENS YESTERDAY received P30 million as a reward for helping the United States prosecute the owners of two ships for dumping sludge oil and concentrated wastewater in American waters.

The Filipino seamen, who requested anonymity, received the $700,000 in cash

SEAFARERS A-3

US envoy, JDV, FVR skip annual Palace 'vin d'honneur'

"HUGE FANS OF FILIPINOS." That's how US envoy Kristie Kenney (3rd from left) calls US Senators Daniel Inouye (foreground) and Theodore Stevens (center) in Zamboanga City while on a "morning" tour

By Michael Lim Ubac

US AMBASSADOR KRISTIE KENNEY was conspicuously absent at the *vin d'honneur* hosted yesterday by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, but Malacañang said this had nothing to do with the downgrading by US authorities of the Philippines' aviation safety oversight rating.

The other no-shows at the *vin d'honneur* were Speaker Jose de Venecia and former President Fidel Ramos, Lakas president and Lakas-their emeritus ex-officio's. The President's son, Iñigo, Hilbay dumps, recently bolted the dominant ruling party which now was largely viewed as a signal for Ms Arroyo allies in the House of Representatives to oust De Venecia from his post when Congress resumes Jan. 28.

The US envoy could not attend the

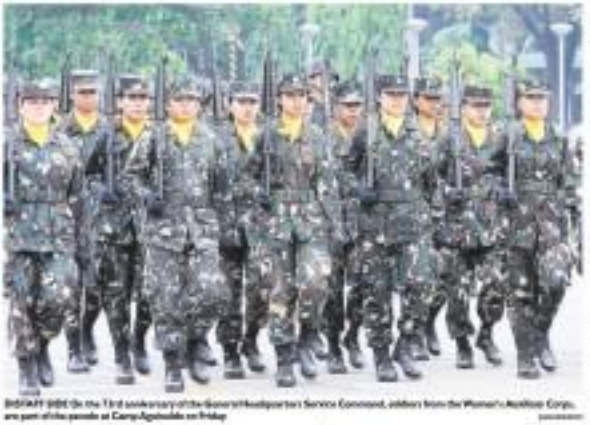
US ENVOY A-11

A TOAST TO DIPLOMATS President Arroyo hosts the traditional New Year reception for the diplomatic community. Ms Arroyo toasts the Papal Nuncio Edward Joseph Adams.

FAA awed by controllers

UPBEAT Marching to a different drummer, a smiling AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Esperon walks toward the anniversary parade as rumors of coup plots continue to spread.

A-4



DISTANT SIDE On the 53rd anniversary of the General Headquarters Service Command, soldiers from the Women's Auxiliary Corps, are part of the parade at Camp Aguinaldo on Friday

US aviation inspectors note long hours, low pay, old tech

By Tarra Quismundo

WHEN THEY SAW how Manila's air traffic came and went last year, American aviation inspectors were awestruck at how Filipino air traffic controllers (ATCs) did so much with too little.

One only has to look inside the Air Transportation Office's Manila Control Tower to see why the Philippines failed to measure up to international aviation safety standards.

With too few people working too long hours, the ATCs—men and women who direct pilots for landing and takeoff—are forced to push the limits of safety daily banking on their skills to make sure every plane and passenger leave and land in Manila just fine.

"We take risks and operate below the safety margin, but we take those mitigated risks instead of losing traffic accumulate in the air," said Nicanor Morada, chair of the Philippine Air Traffic Controllers Association (Patca).

FAA AWED A-10

Esperon: Plotters still recruiting

By Christine O. Avendaño and Nikko Dizon

TOP SECURITY OFFICIALS YESTERDAY insisted the government was not "crying wolf" by talking of destabilization threats, and expressed confidence the Senate would accept President Macapagal-Arroyo's decision on whether to extend the term of Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. as chief of staff.

Esperon said recruitment among the

ESPERON A-4

Pass Jpepa now, President urges Senate

By Michael Lim Ubac

WITH THE TWO SENATORS WHO REviewed the controversial free trade agreement with Japan abdicating its passage, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday urged the treaty-ratifying Senate to immediately approve the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (Jpepa).

"We had hoped by now to have a treaty agreement with Japan signed, sealed and delivered," the President said in remarks at the *vin d'honneur* (small reception) for the diplomatic corps to mark the New Year in Malacañang yesterday.

"We remain optimistic that our friends will see the wisdom of supporting this vital agreement," she said.

The President said the Philippines has to engage the world if it is to become a modern nation.

"For the Philippines to succeed, we must aggressively engage the world. We continued this engagement in 2007 ... we will continue in 2008. We need the world and we like to think the world needs us—our hardworking ability, our ideal geographic location and our relative safety as a friend and ally," Ms Arroyo said.

Senate President Manuel Villar, who attended the reception, said Malacañang cannot force the Senate to do its bidding.

PGAS JPEPA A4

10 nurses face 1 year in jail, deportation

RIVERHEAD, NEW YORK—FOR months, the nurses complained that they were subject to demeaning and unfair working conditions—not what they were promised when they came to America from the Philippines in search of a better life. So they allegedly quit.

But in doing so, they put more than their careers in risk: Prosecutors hit them with criminal charges for allegedly jeopardizing the lives of terminally ill children they were in charge of watching. Their trials scheduled to begin Jan. 28.

The 10 nurses and the lawyer who advised them were charged with conspiracy and child endangerment in what defense lawyers said was an unprecedented move of criminal law in a labor dispute. If convicted of the misdemeanor offenses, they face up to a year in jail on each of 11 counts, and could

NURSES A-13

RIZZA MAULION

MARIA THERESA RAMOS

Reporter Ellen T. mad over talk she helped rebel escape

By Alcuin Papa and Jerome Aning

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT Ellen.

"Why me?" the veteran reporter and broken cellphone Ellen Tordesillas asked in response to news rumors she helped Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon escape from the

REPORTER A-13

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

Loren's protest vs Noli junked

Opposing lawyers agree it was expected; Noli calls it 'a triumph of truth'

By Jaymin Rosing

THE SUPREME COURT, SITTING AS THE PRESIdential Electoral Tribunal, has dismissed and terminated the entire electoral protest filed by Sen. Loren Legarda against Vice President Noli de Castro.

In a 28-page resolution penned by Senior Associate Justice Leonardo-Quisumbing, the PET pushed for lack of legal and factual basis the first aspect of Legarda's protest involving the correctness of manifest errors appearing in the certificates of canvass and election returns from Congressional in the National Board of Canvassers during the 2004 elections.

"She was not able to sufficiently prove that there was widespread cheating," explained Supreme Court spokesman Midas Marquez.

On June 5, 2007, the second aspect of the petition concerning the revision of ballots from 124,406 precincts of 44 provinces was dismissed after Legarda failed to deposit P3.9 million to continue the revision of ballots despite extension.

"The entire protest is now deemed dismissed and terminated," PET said.

Citing the case Defensor-Santiago vs Ramos, the PET stressed that Legarda had effectively abandoned or withdrawn her protest when she ran in the Senate, which term coincides with the term of the Vice Presidency 2004-2010.

According to PET's dismissal of her protest, Legarda said: "Victory has a price. My electoral protest was dismissed and because we failed literally to raise the required amount to pursue it."

But Legarda said "it is one thing to lose a case for the lack of money to sustain it. It is a different story if they cannot appreciate the glaring pieces of evidence of massive electoral fraud."

She also expressed surprise why she was not informed of the verdict ahead of the media.

"I would nonetheless welcome what is verdict of a case I personally fought long and hard is leaked to media even before I could get a copy of my own. Certainly, the verdict leaves more questions than answers."

Legarda's lawyer Simy Jed James said the Legarda camp had expected the dismissal when she assumed office as senator.

"We just wanted to prove that fraud took place," Bellaflor said.

He said he would read the decision first to determine if a motion for reconsideration would be filed.

Ex-Cuervo was elated by the PET ruling.

"This is the triumph of truth. The truth that I won fair and square. I thank the Supreme Court for reliving the true voice of the people. From the very beginning, I was confident that I received the overwhelming mandate of our people in the presidential," he said.

De Castro's counsel, Romulo Macalintal, said "we never doubted nor have any second thought that the election protest of Mr. Legarda will be dismissed for lack of merit."

Legarda, the PET said, failed to established that the copies of the returns used by the NBC were spurious. She earlier identified the provinces of Lanao del Sur, Lanao del Norte and Basilan did not reflect the true will of the electorate for its tainted lack of merit."

Legarda have abandoned her protest in Lanao del Norte and Basilan del Sur.

PET said that records showed that even Legarda's witnesses had testified that they were able to discern secrecy folders and markings in the evidence.

PET further said there was no conclusive evidence to prove the alleged breaks in Congress, which allegedly facilitated the switching of returns. It noted that one of Legarda's witnesses had categorically denied that a break-in and a switching of returns took place in Congress.

The tribunal said that if, for argument's sake, all the votes in 637 precincts included in Lanao del Sur, with about 99,400 votes were considered for Legarda, the senator would still not be able to overcome De Castro's lead of 661,732 votes.

Fr. Honti laid to rest today

FR. EDDIE HONTIVEROS

WHILE HIS NAME WAS NOT YET KING A BILL, HIS music certainly does.

The timeline opening scene of Fr. Eduardo F. Hontiveros' Panunugtungan are all that is needed for millions of the Catholic faithful in Sunday Masses throughout the country to enthusiastically join to the community singing.

Hontiveros, as Fr. Honti, who died of a stroke at age 64 last Tuesday, is acknowledged as the father of Philippine Liturgical Music. Seeing how one of the pioneers in experimenting with composing sacred music into the vernacular. Though he was not the only one to have attempted it, he was certainly the most prolific and most successful, judging by the popularity of his liturgical songs.

His most popular works include Ospan sa Diyos, Magpilot, Maria, Lawalhati, Kordero ng Diyos, Halang Linyenyay, and Pamatagutan.

One of Hontiveros' popular compositions, his version of Papuri sa Diyos, has been sung at St. 39-1975 Basilica in Quiapo.

Hontiveros, born on Dec. 20, 1922 in Molo, Iloilo City, started writing liturgical songs in Tagalog in 1965, when the Second Vatican Council called for the modernization of the liturgy.

He would usually ask the church choirs of communities near the Ateneo de Manila campus to sing the Hagbo to sing his songs. Eventually he came up with a complete set of hymns for the Mass.

For his achievements, Hontiveros was given the Pro Ecclesia Et Pontifice in 2000, the papal award for distinguished service to the Church by lay people and clergy.

The wake for Fr. Honti is being held at the Ateneo de Manila's Church of the Gesu, at the Ateneo. Interment will follow at the Sacred Heart Novitiate in Novaliches.

Beverly T. Mendoza

PLUNDER IN MEYCAUAYAN

Ex-cop chief, treasurer rat on former mayor

By Jocelyn R. Uy

FORMER MEYCAUAYAN CITY MAYOR Eduardo Alarilla was charged yesterday with plunder at the Office of Ombudsman for allegedly pocketing 1Bill million from over 200 "ghost projects" during his nine-year term as city mayor.

Former police chief Ret. Senior Supt. Rolando Lorenzo and former city accountant Ma. Victoria Atienza yesterday filed the plunder complaint against Alarilla.

Lorenzo and Atienza were assisted by lawyer Andres Amayotan, the former chief legal counsel of the Ombudsman, in filing the case with the Ombudsman.

"This is like the plunder case of former President Estrada on a local scale," said Amayotan speaking in behalf of Lorenzo and Atienza.

Republic Act No. 7080 or the "Anti-Plunder Law" describes plunder as the direct or indirect amassing by a public official of at least P50 million in ill-gotten wealth through a combination or series of acts.

'Ghost deliveries'

Lorenzo, the main complainant, also accused Alarilla and his wife, Josie—now the incumbent city mayor—of malversation for allegedly falsifying public documents which allowed them to encash last year over P9 million through "ghost deliveries."

Alarilla served as Meycauayan mayor for three terms from 1998 to 2007. His wife took over last June 2007 but he has been designated a consultant of the Meycauayan city government. As consultant, Alarilla supposedly still wields "the real power in the office of the mayor."

In the affidavit, Atienza said Alarilla was able to withdraw from the city's coffers a total of P60,232,364.00 through several sham projects which she contended allegedly upon the advice of the former mayor.

"Mayor Eduardo Alarilla would instruct to me what amount he needs for himself for the moment, he would either suggest what increase of ghost transactions I should use, or just ask me to think up the excuse," said Atienza, who resigned from her job of 20 years prior to the filing of the plunder case.

She or her assistant would then proceed to fill up a one page temporary reference disbursement voucher, which she would then forward to the city treasurer "who has his standing instruction in such cases," Atienza said.

Atienza said that in most instances, the dummy payee was an unknowing supplier, who was chosen at random by the former mayor.

Lorenzo's business firm, Rowland Construction and Development, was among the dummy firms used by Alarilla from time to time, Atienza said.

The Inquirer failed to reach Alarilla yesterday, but in an interview aired over ABS-CBN last night, Alarilla denied the accusation.

He called Atienza's allegation as "pure lie" and said he had her investigated for alleged irregularities. *With a report from Inquirer Central Luzon*

WHAT'S INSIDE

MERALCO wins some, loses some with ERC ruling A4

RIVAL LP FACTIONS to hold separate anniversaries A7

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RECOVERY, THEN REFUND

Meralco wins some, loses some

By Abigail L. Ho

THE ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION (ERC) has allowed the Manila Electric Co. to recover P6.02 billion worth of generation costs it had previously disallowed in a move which would result in a 18.19-centavo-per-kilowatt-hour (kWh) increase in the generation charge component of electricity bills starting next month.

But the ERC, in the same time ordered Meralco to refund its cost-of-financing charges to the wholesale electricity spot market which would result in a 18.19-centavo-per-kWh reduction in the generation charge.

Combining these two adjustments, the impact on the electricity bills of consumers would be a negligible generation charge increase of 0.49 centavo per kWh.

Failure to recover

ERC commissioner Ma. Teresa Castañeda said Meralco's failure to recover its generation costs had adversely affected its cash flow thus, restricting it from continuing the rehabilitation and improvement of its facilities.

"The ERC's order provides some relief to Meralco's cash flow considering the billions it has advanced to its power suppliers, which have remained uncovered. With the relief, Meralco's viability to remain in business to provide reliable service is assured," ERC chair Rodolfo Albano Jr. said.

Meralco vice president for corporate communications Ilijan Cuna welcomed ERC's decision.

Inconsequential effect

"This decision to have us finally collect the amount we have advanced to our suppliers will provide much needed relief to our cash position," he said in a statement.

Cuna assured Meralco customers they would hardly feel the impact of the generation cost under-recovery collection. "The overall effect will be almost inconsequential since it is even less than a half-centavo increase," he added.

The recovery period for the generation cost has been pegged at two years, while the refund for the net settlement surplus will be in effect for only four months.

ERC's Jun. Morales was in response to Meralco's 30 pending generation and system loss charge recovery applications covering the period from August 2006 to May 2007, which were filed before the ERC when the Supreme Court suspended Meralco's automatic generation rate adjustment (agra) mechanism during that period.

According to Morales, the suspension of the Agra during that period resulted in under-recoveries worth as much as P22.3 billion.

But the ERC only ordered P6.0 billion of that amount.

Meanwhile, Albano said there would be other factors that would lead to more electricity charges in the coming months.

Albano said the National Power Corp. was expected to file its much-postponed rate adjustment mechanism (Cameo) and eight incremental currency exchange rate adjustment (Icera) by the end of the month.

More rate cut

This would likely result in further reductions in the rate that Napocor charged to customers, including Meralco, he said.

Albano said ERC's latest order did not even include the final authority that the ERC gave to Napocor to recover fuel and foreign exchange-related costs, resulting in an additional 1.5-centavo-per-kWh reduction in Luzon rates.

The provisional authority for that recovery, granted in September last year, consisted of generation rate reductions of 25 centavos per kWh in Luzon, 7 centavos per kWh in the Visayas and 6 centavos per kWh in Mindanao.

The rate reductions were reflected in the November billing of Napocor customers.

'Green print' urged for RP energy future

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL... Arroyo summoned yesterday that she would roll on energy summit soon to address the rising price of oil, after a previous attempt to save fuel costs was stalled.

"We can facilitate it in terms of high-level meetings this month and next. Out of those meetings, we will develop a blueprint... or more aptly a green print for the energy future of our nation," Ms Arroyo said at a gathering of foreign diplomats.

"The power arrangements either thrashed due to the high prices of global oil or say program we initiate will be in not just economic independence in the long run but to relieve the pain that energy costs are bearing on the economy."

Earlier this month, the President cut the import tariff on crude oil by 1 percentage point to 3 percent to prevent a possible inflation spiral and suppress the Philippine peso, who has assuming fuel and food costs despite revered supplement growth.

The measure was dismissed by oil companies and consumer groups, including transport workers who have warned hours-college for the removal of the 12-percent value-added tax on oil products.

Ms Arroyo said the cut was the decree for suspension of the tax but economists have warned that the VAT, which contributes around P94 billion in annual revenues, would derail government plans to balance the national budget this year.

Mr Arroyo, who has candidacy for reelection, has set the cornerstone of her administration, has as the expected calls for increased taxes. But she gave assurances that measures, would emerge from the summit, expected to take place later this month and not late February.

The Philippines imports almost all of its energy needs as petroleum, alternative energy sources—hydro, wind, solar power and volcanic—account major investment. In 2006, its fuel import bill was $6.6 billion.

Reuters

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NFA Rice	P18.25	Rice Premium	P27.00
Presyo sa labas ng Bantayan Food Terminal at Tiaong Bulk Trading Center		Rice Fancy	P36-45
		Pork Lechon	P140-160
Regular Well Milled	P19-20	Beef Tapadera	P200-250
Well Milled Rice	P22-23	Manok (whole)	P100-125
Presyo sa Metro Manila at sa Pinoy Rice Processor Cooperative de Nueva Ecija, Bayanihan, Agusan del Sur, Banjar del Norte, Mountain Province, Lanao del Norte, Camarines Norte, Benguet, Zamboanga Sibugay		Itlog (pinaka)	P180-4.80
		Ampalaya	P45-60
		Repolyo	P15-45
		Carrot	P25-60
		Habitwelas	P40-60
		Presyo sa palengke sa Metro Manila	

Source: January 17, 2008

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DTI Bureau of Agriculture Fisheries

Villar to heed doctors' plea

By Gil Cabacungan and Beverly T. Hernandez

SENATE PRESIDENT MANUEL VILLAR said yesterday he would look into the provisions of the Quality Affordable Medicine bill which sought to ban doctors from prescribing branded drugs to their patients.

Villar, in an interview with private radio, said that he would ask the ongoing bicameral conference committee tackling the cheaper medicines bill to limit the Philippine Medical Association's (PMA) plea that the questioned provision be deleted.

While he claimed that he usually did not interfere on the affairs of the bicameral committee, Villar said he would look into the measure avoiding the mandatory prescription of generic drugs "so that there would not be a problem to doctors."

"For me, it is not important if the Senate or the House version is approved. What is important is that the version that will help the public should prevail, but the welfare of doctors is also important to me," said Villar.

Sen. Mar Roxas, the main author of the bill in the Senate, said he preferred that the matter be tackled in a "fair, open and transparent" manner to ensure that most affordable lists to bring down prices of medicines and to ensure that they are safe.

"So, I don't mind if the PMA is present on the Quality Affordable Medicines bill. I will conduct a fair, open and transparent discussion on all provisions, to ensure that no agenda other than the people's welfare will prevail," the chair of the Senate committee on trade said in a statement.

"I urge the proponents of the bill in the Lower House to hold a dialogue with the PMA so that their concerns can be properly addressed before both panels meet to consolidate the two versions. That way, we will be able to come up with the best bill for our people's urgent needs," he added.

Doctors belonging to the PMA have threatened to walk out of their jobs if Congress did not delete a provision in the pending cheaper medicines bill which forces physicians to prescribe only generic names of drugs to their patients.

The Senate passed its version of the bill last Nov. 5, while the House passed theirs on Dec. 20.

Doctors currently prescribe both branded and generic alternatives in contrast to that the House version, Espinosa said, will ban this practice. The Senate version does not have this provision.

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Fired ATO chief still there as No. 2

By Tarra Quismundo

THERE WAS NOTHING IN THE WAY Daniel Smaragdo ended that would suggest he had just been fired. And his desk nameplate still bore a lapel-computer promised the hanging title as "Assistant Secretary."

As far as Smaragdo is concerned, despite his sacking as officer in charge of the Transportation Office, he is still ATO number two. Of course, the second top man, who will take on the chief's role in his absence.

As executive director, he also acts as the ATO chief's deputy, empowered to make decisions, sign papers and even lead safety oversight operations.

"If the secretary's boss in the department, he might ask me to take over... depends on my assignment," Dimagiba told the reporters in an interview yesterday which he checked in last no more than five minutes.

Mr Arroyo ordered Dimagiba as acting transportation chief on Thursday in light of the ATO's failure to comply with international air safety standards.

Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza was ordered to temporarily take control of the ATO.

Dimagiba said in the interview that he even might be designated concurrently as chief of ATO's safety division, the office that is supposed to take care of pilot and aircraft licensing and certification and surveillance inspections—an area which, precisely the IAA had cited the ATO to be inconsistently unacceptable.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, January 19, 2008
1st Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading:	1 Sm 8:4-7, 10-22a
Gospel:	Mk 2:13-17

When Jesus went out again beside the lake, a crowd came to him and he taught them. As he walked along, he saw a tax collector sitting in his office. This was Levi, the son of Alphaeus. Jesus said to him, "Follow me." And Levi got up and followed him.

And it so happened that while Jesus was sitting at Levi's house, tax collectors and sinners were sitting with him and his disciples for there were indeed many of them. But there were also those from the camp of the Pharisees' party, among those who followed Jesus, and when they saw him eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, "What? Does he drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

Jesus heard them and answered, "Healthy people don't need a doctor, but sick people do. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners."

Commentary:

Levi (also known as Matthew) was tax collector by the straight and narrow. Roman rule collecting taxes for them Jews meant that he expected to earn quite handsome commissions. Rome is a pretty smart.

And, the Lord called Levi to change his name and to follow Him. For Jesus, a man is more than his name. Levi follow him matter of minutes.

A daily examination of conscience keeps us mindful that we are serving the call who are in need of the healing of the Divine Physician. May we have the grace to grow in daily faith in the simple prayer, "Lord Jesus, have mercy on me, a sinner."

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Groups nominate 2 to Comelec top post

By Jerome Aning

A COALITION OF GROUPS PUSHING FOR electoral reforms yesterday nominated retired Supreme Court Justice Jose Melo and poll watchdog head Carlos Medina to chair the Commission on Elections.

In a press conference in Manila, the Electoral Reform Advocates Search Committee for Comelec appointments, composed of 14 representatives of various groups, called on President Macapagal-Arroyo not to give in to political pressure when deciding on her next appointments to Comelec, calling attention to the "famous leaked" tape for "foulmouthed" senator of former chair Benjamin Abalos Sr.

The Comelec still has to clean after Abalos resigned last October after being implicated in a corruption scandal. Two more commissioners, Florentino Tuason Jr. and Nicodemo Ferrer, are due to retire next month after serving out their seven-year terms.

"With the 2010 election not too far away, the President will be under tremendous pressure to appoint candidates backed by politicians. Her wish to offer the President alternatives who, we believe, exhibit the qualities of competence, independence and integrity that will assure a lasting legacy at Comelec," said search committee chair Christian Monsod, himself a former Comelec chair.

Others nominated

The search committee also named eight more individuals as possible successors to Borra and Tuason. They are former judges Abraham Sotto of Davao and Gabriel Ingles of Cebu, lawyers Howard Calleja, Lue Tee Gan, Noemi Medina and Manuel Mondejar; information technology and business professional Mr. Oriel Manzano; and academicians Rumpar Rasyid of the Presidential Management Staff.

Asked why the committee never considered recommending politicians to the position of Comelec chair, Monsod said, "If we had one more candidate, (I) feel there should not be politicians in the Comelec. It would be very difficult to say that if we appoint a politician who is identified with the administration and we appoint somebody who is identified with the opposition, then there is balance. I don't think we can appoint politicians to commissioners and expect that commission to behave in a non-partisan and impartial manner."

Search committee

The other members of the committee are Fr. Joel Pontioso of the Jesuit Conference for Responsible Voting; then Presidencia de Villa, former National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections chair Richard Gordon, Commission for Electoral Reform chair Romeo Capulong, integrated Bar of the Philippines president Feliciano Bautista, Bantayog ng mga Bayani of the Philippines vice president Edgar Chua, Dean Antonio de La Viña of the Ateneo School of Government.

Makati Business Club executive director Alberto Lim, Social Weather Stations president Mahar Mangahas, Caucus for Development 2010 Movements chair Ma. Aurora Tolentino and executive director Yoyo Fernandez, Social Action Justice and Peace.

The 15-year-old Melo, after his retirement from the Supreme Court, was appointed by the President to chair a government commission tasked to look into extrajudicial killings that have been linked to the military and police-related leftist activists.

Medina, 46, was a spokesperson of the Legal Network for Truthful Elections (Lente) that monitored the conduct of the May 2007 elections. He is the current executive director of the Ateneo Human Rights Center.

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Pass Jpepa now, President urges Senate

From page A1

Ermita the "objectionable provisions" are another from the past, the Senate will oppose its ratification, said Villar, who vows on to repeat environmentalists' objections to the agreement.

But he conceded that the treaty may no longer be ratified because "it's [an] all or nothing" deal.

The Jpepa is set to be ratified when the Senate resumes sessions on Jan. 28, following the endorsement—albeit heavily hedged—by Senators Manuel Roxas II and Miriam Defensor-Santiago, who headed the two Senate committees that interviewed it.

The deal, which would immediately remove all tariffs on about 80 percent of Philippine exports to Japan by value, has already been signed by the Philippines and ratified by the Japanese parliament.

Two nationalist senators opposed to Jpepa want the Senate to kill it, saying any jobs created would be meager. It low-paying entry-level positions, and that the agreement would allow Japan to dump more wastes on the Philippines.

The allegation has been denied by Tokyo, which earlier said it considered the pact a landmark in bilateral relations. (See Jpepa focus on this page.)

Roxas and Santiago launched a review of the treaty in the Senate amid the uproar.

Earlier this week, Roxas said he was advocating ratification of the free trade agreement, despite his conversations about the treaty's benefits, because the Philippines would stand to lose more by rejecting it.

He said that without Jpepa, the country would be excluded from the free trade area between Japan and members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) to be formalized in a few months.

Most of the Philippines' Asean neighbors have signed or are negotiating similar treaties with Japan.

IN THE KNOW

What's it all about

THE JAPAN-PHILIPPINES ECONOMIC Partnership Agreement (Jpepa) is aimed at facilitating and promoting the free flow of goods, persons, services and capital between the Philippines and Japan by eliminating tariffs on almost all industrial goods.

Billed as a "new age" free trade agreement, it was signed by President Macapagal-Arroyo and then Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in Helsinki, Finland in September 2006.

The treaty, which has already been ratified by the Japanese parliament, has to be approved by a two-thirds vote in the finally ratifying Philippine Senate.

Aside from eliminating or reducing tariffs on 80 percent of industrial and agricultural products, Jpepa also aims to facilitate easier entry of Filipino workers into Japan, among other features.

The agreement has been strongly opposed by environmental and nationalist groups, which have criticized it as "unconstitutional and disadvantageous."

Some legal experts said the agreement "violated constitutional safeguards on national patrimony" while a number of economic-related provisions clashed with the government-allowed Japan to dump toxic wastes in the country. Inquirer Research

Santiago recommended a conditional Senate ratification of the treaty over concerns that Jpepa's provisions granting national treatment and most favored nation (MFN) status to Japanese investors would violate the Constitution.

The conditions are: That there be an exchange of notes between the Philippines and Japan guaranteeing the supremacy of the Philippine Constitution over the treaty's provisions; and passage by the Senate of a resolution of constitutional concurrence clarifying that any Japanese investments would be made in accordance with the requirements of Philippine laws.

Santiago said the text was now drafting the resolution that would also contain provisions for funding of safety nets and allow remedial administrative measures to protect affected sectors.

She said the Senate would likely finish the ratification process just before Congress now adjourns on March 29.

Yesterday, a network of civil society groups calling itself the "Magbalon Bisik Jpepa Coalition" threatened to withdraw support from Roxas, widely known to be seeking the presidency in 2010, if he continues to support the treaty.

The group said Roxas' advocacy of Jpepa was "treacherous" and a "clear affront" of the country's sovereignty and sovereignty and patrimony" to seek the highest office.

Anida Maza, secretary general of the Alliance of Progressive Labor, said ratifying the treaty was tantamount to economic treason as Jpepa would not only worsen the country's "turbulent performance" in job generation but would also lead to massive job losses, especially in the semiconductor and related industries.

"How can Filipinos seriously consider Senator Roxas to lead us in 2010, when he accepts those unbuildable loans to 'Fil-Ipinos?'" Maza said. Which is report from Jocelyn R. Ily

Fischer, chess genius, dies in Iceland; 64

From page A1

MOZART OF CHESS Bobby Fischer in April 1962 in New York (left) and in March 2005 departing for Iceland from Tokyo, following his release from detention AFP/JIJI PRESS

was said Fischer died in a Reykjavik hospital on Thursday. An Icelandic media reported that he died of kidney failure after a long illness.

A high school dropout who may have been the greatest chess player of all time, the U.S.-born chess legend battled his life-long depression.

Fischer had lived for the last nine years in Iceland, after serving eight months behind bars in Japan in a new twist to a life that had gone downhill ever since his meteoric rise to fame.

The Brooklyn-bred genius made headlines around the world when he wrested the world title from Soviet dominance in 1972, beating world champion Boris Spassky in Reykjavik known as the match of the century.

The match took on mythic dimensions as a clash between the world's two superpowers.

Fischer was said to have an IQ higher than Albert Einstein's and once dodged his gift would win him undying fortune. He would make extravagant demands over matches in a way more commonly seen in boxing.

But while the theatrics made him a celebrity—and an outcast with helping him conserve his opponents—he also succeeded in alienating himself from all but a small band of friends and chess enthusiasts.

Fischer always had a high opinion of himself.

Asked who was the greatest player in the world, he once answered: "It's rare to be humble, but it would be stupid if I did not tell the truth. It is Fischer."

Liked to see foes 'squirm'

It was not an idle claim. At possibly the greatest natural chess genius the world has seen, he was called "the Mozart of chess" when he began winning at the age of six.

His success soon gained fodder a reputation for being tricky. He told friends he liked to terrorize opponents even when opponents began to feel they would lose.

"I like to see 'em squirm," he said.

Despite having a Jewish mother, Fischer was a virulent anti-Semite, using broadcasts at his Bang radio station to accuse Jews of everything from his legal woes to an alleged conspiracy to kill all elephants.

The reclusive Fischer's return to the spotlight began on Sept. 11, 2001 when he rang up a Philippine radio station in half the "wonderful news" of the terror attacks and launched a profane tirade against Jewish people.

He praised the terror strikes and said he wanted to see America "wiped out."

In the 1972 world title match, Fischer, dressing carefully over the protests of organizers and the audience, settled on his own set to end 24 years of Soviet chess supremacy by dethroning Spassky, who had by his side an army of fans, and trainer strategists.

In the recent book "White King and Red Queen," British author Daniel Johnson said the match was "an abstract struggle between an individual battle-pursued genius against overpowering ... yet dark struggle confronted all human life."

"In Spassky's submission to his fate and Fischer's fierce ecstatic triumph, the Cold War's deepest secret was already foreshadowed."

Fischer, whose chess education had consisted of locking himself in a room for days on end facing off against himself, abandoned his title without moving a pawn by failing to meet a deadline to defend his crown in Manila in 1975.

Paranoia reinforced

Fischer withdrew into himself, not playing in public and living on little more than the money of his admirers, although millions of enthusiasts stepped out in the icing of chess.

Fischer's paranoia was reinforced in 1981 when his wealthy supporter made him a multi-taken suspect in a California bank robbery.

In another of his interviews on Filipino radio, Fischer accused the media of trying to "poison the public against me."

"They constantly use the words extremist, extremists, extremist group," Fischer said. "I am hating. I am hurting!"

Fischer returned to chess in 1992 with a rematch against Spassky in Yugoslavia, then in the throes of the Balkan wars.

At a press conference, he spat on a UN government notice warning him he was breaking sanctions on Yugoslavia and proceeded to defeat Spassky once again, winning more than $3 million on which he boasted he would never pay tax.

Fischer was the youngest international grandmaster at 15, 16 years and nine months—to US player had beaten more than seven in a row.

As his fame grew, his temperament became more unpredictable.

He refused to play matches on the unlucky the fourth Sabbath.

In the 1990s, he was said to be living under assumed names in cheap hotels in Pasadena on the outskirts of Los Angeles, surviving mainly on occasional royalties from his books.

In London, one newspaper described him as "dressed like a derelict, muddling and fat and with a straggly beard."

In his final years, former friends painted a picture of a solitary man spending his days in his room limited with chess books, mangos and jars of vitamins, playing chess by himself and reading magazines on how to keep in touch.

One commentator said from was one constant through his life's exceptional peaks and ravages—his "burning hatred with the rest of the human race." AFP, Reuters, AP

Esperon: Plotters still recruiting, transporting firearms

From page A1

plotters was continuing.

"It's a concern to me. I cannot simply let it go and gain strength. Right from the start, we want to say things in the open," Esperon told reporters when asked if the destabilization threats were serious.

He added the military could not keep quiet when "we are discovering under or some plans to transport or perpetrate some felonies." He declined to elaborate.

"Let me not be [seen as] crying 'wolf' for indeed there is already evidence that firearms are being transported, some recruitment is ongoing including inside the chain," Esperon said.

"We do not know what's happening outside but what we can assure is that we have always been ready for those kinds of scenarios."

"It would be counterproductive for any administration to have a destabilization," Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro said, but he rejected Cruz's claims that the Palace was using the coup talk to justify the extension of Esperon in his post.

On claims by some groups that the military would be destabilized if Esperon's term was prolonged, Teodoro said: "I believe the armed forces can and will accept any decision that the President makes whether or not [she extends Esperon's term.]"

Teodoro said he was against extending Esperon's term in the military, adding that that one had to "trust your men."

He claimed the arrest on Tuesday of a group of soldiers in Quezon City "was connected to a destabilization activity."

"That's what we feel, it's connected to a destabilization activity because why would you transfer firearms from place to place unless the scene of darkness?" he told reporters after the rite d'lieu memorializing.

Scout Rangers

Teodoro was referring to the arrest of four Army Scout Rangers for alleged involvement in a plot to destabilize the government. Two of them have since been released for lack of evidence.

Teodoro also dismissed talk that the government was about to declare martial law.

He also said it was safe for Ms Arroyo to leave the country next week for her trips to Switzerland and Dubai.

Plot continues

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita himself dismissed claims that Makeambang were behind the destabilization talk.

Esperon dismissed the claim of a security official who told the business that military reports on the supposed coup threats were being used by a power bloc in Malacañang to have his term extended at all costs.

"That's just a concoction of people who want power for themselves," Esperon said.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) has ordered the dropping of charges of illegal possession of firearms against two of the five soldiers arrested for alleged involvement in a coup plot.

Ordered released were Pfc Jerry Ilgo, Orlando Sidorela and Airman Cpl. Ramon Peñasia.

Not in military

Still held by the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) are Senior Ranger Cpl. Mohamed Marasian and Private First Class and Marine Cpl. Ross Agon.

But Agon' wife, Josephine, said reporters that her husband was never an enlisted personnel of the AFP.

"He is a family driver. He was never in the military," a tearful Mrs. Agon said in Filipino.

Mrs. Agon said her husband had been employed with Dr. some family who recently moved to Subic.

Sidorela, Maasman, Pasadenes and Peñasia were among the 40 Scout Ranger soldiers who were dismissed from the service by the Philippine Army last Christmas eve after being detained for over a year in Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal, without formal investigation.

The enlisted personnel were implicated in the failed February 2006 mutiny. They were supposed to have been led by former Scout Ranger commander, Army Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, former Marine Commandant Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda, and Alaska Cpl. Ariel Querubin.

The three officials and 20 other military officers are still detained in Tanay.

In a press conference with lawyers Tibaln Cruz-Angeles and Angel Guevarra, Peñasia said he was not part of any plot to destabilize the Arroyo administration. With a report from Alexis Pagsi

Rival LP factions to hold separate anniversaries

FROM RUMP ELECTIONS TO ROUS anniversary celebrations, the Defun wing of the Liberal Party continues to view with disdain the efforts of the rival wing of Hartman cio Secretary Lito Atienza to bind itself as the party's legitimate representative.

Former education secretary and LP assistant treasurer "Butch" Abad said Atienza's "bogus" anniversary event scheduled today in Manila has made his group "the laughing mark in coffee houses."

"We find their antics amusing because clearly these are acts of desperation meant to sow confusion and project the LP as deeply divided when we're not. The Secretary and his key supporters are deluding the people into attending this masquerade ball. There is only one LP and that is the legitimate party under Senator Manny Villar," said Abad in a statement.

Aside from Atienza, the event's keynote speaker, the disputed LP anniversary will have as guests Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya (for the welcome remarks), former Palace Chief of Staff and defeated senatorial candidate Michael Defensor as host. "I wouldn't be surprised if they also invited the President to attend this event, which is nothing but a masquerade ball," Abad said.

Abad said that the Supreme Court had already issued a ruling voiding the election held by Atienza and his allies to elect a new group to replace the board led by former Sen. Franklin Drilon.

"Let's respect that and give party unity under Senator Roxas a chance to succeed," said Abad.

Roxas, who is widely expected to be the party's standard bearer in 2010, has offered to reconcile with Atienza in order to reunite the LP but the Cabinet official has refused. Atienza has filed a case with the Commission on Elections disputing Roxas' proclamation as LP president last November.

Quezon Representative and LP member Erin Tañada said the real LP anniversary would be held on Jan. 30 with a whole-day community service projects in Barangay Commonwealth in Quezon City to be held in partnership with Quezon City Mayor Sonny Belmonte.

Pope lauds slain priest

By Beverly T. Mendoza

Pope Benedict XVI has commended the good work of Father Jesus Reynaldo Roda, the priest who was killed in Daet last earlier this week.

The Pope has extended his condolences to those who mourn his loss in a message sent to Bishop Angelito Lampon of the Apostolic Vicariate of Jolo, through the Papal Secretary of State Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone.

Bertone said the Holy Father was "saddened to learn of the brutal and tragic killing of Father Jesus Reynaldo Roda, OMI on the island of Tabawan."

The Pope has also praised the late priest for his work at the Notre Dame School and for his good example as a clergy member in the region he serves.

"Paying tribute to the courage and faithfulness shown by this generous priest in his ministry as head of Notre Dame School, His Holiness commends Father Roda's example to priests and people throughout the region, and especially to the young," said Bertone.

The Pope has also called for the perpetrators of Roda's murder to renounce their violent ways and to contribute to building a just and peaceful society.

The Holy Father has given his blessing to the people of Tabawan as a "pledge of comfort and strength at this time of sorrow."

PETRON

XTRAMILE Challeng

Champions Edition

Who will rule the road?

PETRON X

"HOW FAR CAN YOU GO ON A FULL TANK OF PETRON XTRA ULEADED?"

The answer to this question will once again be sought out on the open roads by participants of the Petron Xtra Mile Challenge Champions Edition, which officially entered its fourth year on January 14.

Eight teams, veterans in their own right in the previous Petron marathon but scramblers now, will compete with each other to set a new record and reclaim the best car running on a full tank of Petron Xtra Unleaded.

Traversing the length of Luzon, from Pagsanjan, Laguna, to Sorsogon, the participants' Team Zayco Hermanos, the 37th Team, Team AR, The Busy Bodies, The Philippine Star Team, DZRH/DZFB Team, and Team AB, The Busy Bodies, The Philippine Star Team, DZRH/DZFB Team will make a fresh attempt to break the standing record of 1,400 kilometers set by the Team Zayco Hermanos in 2006.

On top of the six returning veteran-racer teams will be bolded by the entry of Petron's first all-female team, Petron XTRA Unleaded Goddesses.

The Petron Xtra Mile Challenge Champions Edition started from Petron SLEX on January 14, as the first transport stage to Tiaong, Quezon. The following day, the group completed the second transport stage to Pagsanjan, Laguna.

The official run flagged off from Pagsanjan, Laguna, with the first pit stop in Bato, Sor. The second official leg crossed the fourth (Naga) and fourth (Legazpi) provinces through the winding highways of the Bicol region, stopping in Naga, Camarines Sur, for the second pit stop. The final leg will run all the way from Naga to the port town of Matnog, Sorsogon, the southernmost tip of Luzon.

Expectations are high for another record run for the teams, which will, in fact, could end up back all the way to Calabarzon but or even Quezon Province.

The teams will be driving the Bora, its new 1,000 automatic transmission, with the official vehicles provided by Honda Cars Alabang, Honda Cars Ortigas, and Honda Cars Quezon City. Other sponsors include Bendix Polpred, Castrol, Iowa Transparent, Speedlab, Top Gear Magazine, and Goodyear Philippines.

Verifying the results are official is, in turn, from the Automobile Association Philippines, the national auto club, and the Carlo Pascual Group Inc., and the national motoring press corps.

Traversing the length of Luzon, from Pagudpud to Sorsogon, the participants-- Team Ramirez, Team Zayco Hermanos, the 37th Team, Team AR, The Busy Bodies, The Philippine Star Team, DZRH/DZFB Team will make a fresh attempt to break the standing record of 1,400 kilometers

Meet the champions of the open road

Ramirezes
Pochoko and Louis Ramirez

THE RACE that launched Petron's Xtra Mile Challenge was that of Pochoko Ramirez, the Philippines' racing and rally legend, who, on a full tank of Sea Unleaded, drove a total of 1,114 kilometers from Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte to Sorsogon, Bicol in 2005.

By the 2008 SMC-champion edition, Pochoko and members of his family Georges, Louis and Sheila will once again run their friends Jojo in the goal to beat the 1,400 kilometers set established by Zayco this year's record of Region 10 celebrated in 2006.

The Ramirezes are among the more sport-person families in the country. Pochoko runs the Driver of the Year title for his many in the 1970s. His four other driver include Georges and Louis and daughter-in-law Sheila took up racing and have appeared in the winners' circle of various motor sports events.

But what's the appeal in this family of the XMC, which is not always growing as the finish line has lost steadily being the last on running?

"It's the complete opposite of what we're doing. We have racing to drive more economically it's very difficult to extend the urge to drive fast, especially on the highway when everyone's passing you," says Louis. "We could explain."

The first XMC in 2006 is still fresh in Pochoko's memory. In the run, he remembers encountering horrible traffic jams.

"We had to wait for a long time for the traffic to clear up. We were driving at 40 kph and we were stuck in traffic for 30 minutes. We were very frustrated," he says.

Louis, on the other hand, remembers the fun he had with his father during the run. "We were driving and we were talking about the car and how we could improve the car's performance. We were also talking about the scenery and the people we saw along the way," he says.

Pochoko and Louis are confident that they can break the record this year. "We have a lot of experience now. We know what to expect and we know how to drive the car to get the most out of it," Pochoko says.

Zayco-Hermanos
Emilio and Emmanuel Zayco

THREE 1,400 kilometer runs from Bangui, Ilocos Norte to Sorsogon on just a full tank of gas were a feat done deed by this team only in a lucky streak.

They would like to remember what they did to achieve that record, the highest kilometer run for a full tank of Petron Xtra Unleaded gasoline, which is currently the benchmark to aspire for or break by participants in the 2008 XMC champions edition.

But brothers Tootsie and Manny Zayco could remember the places and people, aside from to those where they drove their Honda Jazz through all those highways and roads two years ago. Manny Volcano was only eight," says Manny, who functions as the alternate driver and navigator for Tootsie.

As to strategies on the road, Tootsie says "we installed and quietly used our legs. And we try to drive by feel."

The advantage of this team is the fact that they're used to long drives, having driven for 24 hours straight from Visayas to Mindanao.

"We had fun traffic and sometimes we were also sharing laughs particularly to remember when our drivers 'skip' during stopovers you lose concentration. And because I'm the older brother, I would always say to Manny to drive up as there was no stopover."

Petron's extraordinar

THE demand for fuel-economy has never been today due to the unabated increase in oil p

Petron's commitment to the Xtra Mile Challenge runs every run, fuel challenges drivers to make the most of this unleaded, is a testament to Petron's commitment products efficient and pro-consumers.

"Since it makes us happy about the Xtra Mile that it has made ordinary motorists more conscious of driving which is one of our advocacies here in Petron," Petron's vice president for marketing.

The Xtra Mile Challenge, began in 2005, was the extraordinary properties of Xtra Unleaded fuel-economy.

Racing legend Pochoko Ramirez drove a Honda Jazz from Ilocos Norte to Sorsogon on a full tank of gas and recorded a total kilometrage of 1,114.

In 2006, the Zayco Hermanos team, who drove a Honda Jazz from Ilocos Norte to Matnog, Sorsogon, topped the mileage on a full tank of Xtra Unleaded, which is the current record.

In 2006, team Busy Bodies also made the most out of a full tank of Xtra Unleaded, which is the current record.

This year's Xtra Mile Challenge, which officially started at the winning teams from the previous years to make a new record for a full tank of Xtra Unleaded.

"Such an extraordinary feat has never been done before in the Philippines," Campos.

"It generated a buzz among the motoring public and the thrill we had to and experienced the extraordinary," he said.

Petron's general manager for retail Ignacio Campos said he hopes the teams will break the record. "If we could exceed."

"In our little way we've been able to share with the motoring public the importance of fuel economy, especially now that the price of fuel."

Chairwoman Corallos, Petron's vice president for Xtra Mile Challenge is also about educating the motoring public on how they can save on fuel by adhering to good driving habits and fuel-efficient driving discipline.

"The activity is proof that anyone can achieve fuel economy as long as they don't have to be a Formula One race driver to do this. By adhering to disciplined driving our need to constantly refuel your vehicle, the challenge is every day for drivers. Fuel consumption can be significantly reduced if you can purge an entire tank of fuel."

Petron Xtra Unleaded currently holds the record in the category.

Team Busy Bodies
Del Rosso and Roman Florenza

TEAM BUSY BODIES got its name from the demanding newspaper work done by the tandem of assistant business editors Sofia Perez and Roman Florenza of Manila Bulletin and Philippine Star.

As busy bodies, the two somehow managed to get some time off from work and participated and eventually won in the Mini-Challenge media edition in 2007.

Busy Bodies had beaten other nine teams by registering a 1,340.7 kilometers at a hit speed of 8mt. Then Honda cars finally reigned in Batangas. Albay after having traversed the entire length of Luzon from Batangas, Bicol, Sorsogon and the way to Matnog, Sorsogon and back reaching in Albay.

"We did not expect to win. At the last day, we saw the other cars stopping and we were informed by radio that we were the second car still running, we got all excited. We passed by the first car that stopped and then everybody clapped."

Sofia describes his team as "the most motivated" whose main advantage is the willingness to win.

Sofia says the XMC is a good project which promotes the idea that a combination of good driving habits and the right gasoline can result to fuel efficient vehicles.

"Economy runs alone safe driving. This is a course on proper driving. Your car will attain fuel efficiency and at the same time you contribute to the protection of the environment."

To prepare for the XMC champions edition Sofia says, "We don't intend to have music. We won't even bring our cellphones. We will be light as possible. I told my partner not to eat too much. The best preparation is that we won't talk about anything else except the competition and our driving."

The 37th Team
Mike and Grace Asuncion

"SLOW but steady wins the race" was the moral lesson from the basic and refresher course.

Husband and wife team Mike and Grace Asuncion took this lesson to heart when they placed second in the 2006 Petron Eco Mile Challenge.

The two endured three days of driving from Bataan, Bicol route in the north to the southern tip of Luzon in Matnog, Sorsogon, a feat that resulted in 1,290 kilometers on a full tank of Petron fire Unleaded.

Being the shortest car with speed of 50 to 60 kilometers per hour and always lagging behind all the teams, the 37th team suffered thirst, heat and cant of the open road, before running out of gas in Sorsogon.

The 37th team was the only of 10 hillcruiser that ran the route garnered by the winning team of Jayco Enterprises 1,400 kilometers on a full tank of gas.

"Fun and exciting, the Eco Mile Challenge is very engaging, keeps you on your toes literally. Before the start, I couldn't sleep. The challenge proper does make you tense. I was the most serious among the participants," says Mike, who had joined similar fuel economy runs in the past.

To prepare for the 2008 XMC, Mike and Grace drove their car to 300 Batangas and made two, each measured gas consumption on the way back and forth.

To relieve the pressure off the run, Mike and Grace would call the nanny on the cell phone to ask about their son, lining up drinks like Red Bull along with music helped when conversation ended. Confidence for the team to reach the extra miles was boosted by the thought of their car relying on Petron's FIRA Unleaded gas.

"We've tried other gasolines before, this based on my experience the Petron Eco Unleaded is the most economical," says Mike.

Team AR
Ren and Ronald delos Reyes

ZZYU RADIO host and broadcaster Ren delos Reyes and his son Ronald, who have participated in previous Petron Eco Mile Challenge events, considers the XMC a once in a lifetime experience that tested the limits of his patience and discipline as a driver. "Compared to [our] 's XMC champion edition is tougher. We have a screwed to cruise and that's going to be a tall order," says Ren. Auto Review team, which started joining the XMC in 2004, finished third in the 2006 XMC, with a record of 1,332.8 kilometers for a full tank of Petron RX3 unleaded gasoline.

"I vividly enjoyed competing in the XMC. Its really had to use all the techniques up our sleeves and we had to observe a lot of concentration and discipline."

As to the road discipline, Ren says he was forced to change the bad habits in driving to good driving habits, like minimal use of brakes or lifting his foot off the accelerator and letting the car's momentum move it forward the next one doing a coasting.

For non cars, he had driven to Legazpi City in the past morning upwards and with and without air-conditioning, measuring his vehicle's gas consumption all throughout.

Ren recalls over driving with the air conditioning on, similar to what he has done in the past, driving from Iriosi Luzon Expressway to Baguio, Angeles and commuting only a liter for 42 kilometers.

"I would drive without encumbrances. I've driven in Mindanao without music, done that one in the UE," says Ren who just drives water or syrups water to his face to take away the nagging for sleep. "Instrumentation, taping" he says.

As to the gasoline he's using for the competition, Ren says Petron fire Unleaded is "a very efficient fuel to use, burns easily, even if you step lightly on the accelerator."

Ren says in the current 1,400 kilometers for a full tank is tough act to follow. Ren there's more to fuel economy driving than consumption rates.

He compares economy driving with boxing. "In economy driving, the objective is not to hit anything along the way. But you use your hands in steering the vehicle and you do a lot of footwork. You fly like a butterfly and sting like bee. Ren, you don't have to be ferocious. Just be gentle."

Philippine Star
Lester Dizon and Jeff Reyes

THE XMC media challenge held in January last year, where his team the Philippine Star placed second, is still vivid to Lester Dizon. When he saw the car of Team Busy Bodies still running after they stopped, his heart literally sank. Team Busy Bodies took the crown by only a small fraction of land against Philippine Star.

This time around, Lester says he and Jeff have made a full analysis of their run and made changes to the strategy this team will use in the XMC champion edition.

"We've learned a lot, including mistakes, from the last run. And these things that we now know, we will surely apply in the XMC champion edition," says Lester.

"There was also one thing that we have realized. The road conditions when Subic to Nueva Ecija for recoil in 2006 were different from the road conditions when the Zayco-Pantabangan made them in 2006. Both rewards were done on road conditions different from the road conditions when Busy Bodies made their record."

Lester says he and Jeff are more than newspaper people as the cars of them are car and racing enthusiasts and participates as well. Lester, who owns a 1970 Chevrolet Camaro, a muscle car, and a 6500 mustang. He has joined a number of shows, karting, and motorcycle races. Jeff, on the other hand, is into karting races.

Lester says aside from challenge the driver to become disciplined in many aspects, such as maximizing on maximizing an speed is and using less Honda. Drivers often wake up at 2 in the morning and then start driving to beat the traffic.

"So what Jeff and I do, if we drive for four to five straight hours, we didn't stop, we even for a per break. He do replace our water intake."

"You always think about how you could cover more distances with less gas. And during the long driving, you shouldn't be impatient. Right now I am conditioning my mind for the long time," adds Lester who realized, through the XMC, that 60 kilometers is the speed limit of large highways in the country.

DZRH - DZRB team
Jess Garcia and Joseph Javier

THE 'HAPI' trademark and lucky charm on the mud which they flash constantly from their car's window was the so-called "hapihan," custom-made road signs that sum in big bold letters: "GIVE WAY PLS," "PAGE" and "GO."

An ingenious idea, the "hapihan" sign made scores for DZRH-DZRB team easier through the team's traffic and man of scores and facts attitude cruising the street.

Jess Garcia of DZRH says the technique allowed for less use of breaks, which means more savings on gas. In fact, he says the strategy contributed greatly to the team landing the third place slot in 2007 XMC media challenge.

DZRH-DZRB team composed of Jess Garcia of DZRH and Joseph Javier of DZRB had a record of 1,228.7 kilometers, shy only of 31 kilometers from the Philippine Star team of Jeff Reyes and Lester Dizon.

"This was my first time to join the XMC," says Jess, who had previous car race experiences that started in 1999, winning the Iwa cadets title in a rough road race. He did the slalom and even qualified for a circuit race.

"I did replace the XMC as a different challenge because it wasn't about being the fastest car. But I do consider myself flexible. I could be in the fastest car category or the slowest car category."

He says the XMC is a "mind setting" challenge that prompts the driver to sit, wears remember and maintain the proper speeds. He says it's like driving with grace under the water and difficult road conditions, such as typhoon devastated roads in point of blind.

According to Jess there are three conditions to make a car run more miles for less gas: the make of the car, the driver who should practice good driving habits, and Petron Xtra Unleaded gasoline.

Certina's new Blue Ribbon line: Excellence far beyond the surface

MAISON DIXIE-BARRETT bring out the stringent 'box' in 1961, already the early version of the Ds. those Certina DS-Blue 80000m had built in excess upon that hold truth, and took the high waves as the world's most technologies timepiece. The early rebranded and updated DS Blue Ribbon stays beyond the tall expectations of all diving enthusiasts and fans of living life to the limit.

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More than just a transportation and leisure, Top Gear is also about the very real and practical experience of acquiring a car, maintaining it, and of course, driving it.

Top Gear focuses the best and latest vehicles to enter our shores as well as the latest brands for the luxuries, including the lifestyle that goes with it. Top Gear is the authority. Top Gear editors and contributors are among the best and well respected in the auto industry delivering straight to the point, yet balanced opinions and reviews.

Gadgets

GADGETS MAGAZINE features more than just electronic equipment and high-tech trends. We are redefining the cute "tech lifestyle" with a fresh new look and exciting new concepts.

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INQUIRER

OPINION

Your e-mail feedback

One expert opinion

AS AN OLDEST DEMOCRACY HAS BECOME A shameful showcase of a free society. For the second straight year, a world survey on democracy found "a decline in freedom for the Philippines, due to serious, high-level corruption allegations, the jailing of former President Joseph Estrada and a spike in political killings in the run-up to the [May 2007] legislative elections," according to the New York-based Freedom House. As a result, the Philippines, along with Kenya and Bangladesh, has been taken off the list of "electoral democracies" and remained stuck among the 68 countries classified as "partly free." Freedom House especially rated the decline of freedom in the Philippines and Kenya, seeing they were "previously regarded as important additions to the democratic world and models for Asia and Africa."

EDITORIAL

Freedom House is a private organization that "supports the expansion of freedom" and regularly conducts surveys on the state of freedom around the world. It counts Eleanor Roosevelt and other prominent Americans among its founders and it has been headed by several rivil rights leaders.

But all this did not prevent Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye from questioning the group's motives and methods. In a report that carried loud echoes of the Arroyo administration's dismissive response to the findings of Philip Alston (United Nations' special rapporteur on extrajudicial killings), Bunye complained that the organization never consulted the government but simply relied on "propaganda" to arrive at its conclusions. "We should be wary of private foreign groups that claim to be expert watchdogs on freedom and democracy," Bunye said. "Let us be educated by outside forces that rely on propaganda rather than systematic and thorough research and consultations to underpin their statements." He added that the "undeniable truth" is that "Filipinos live in a free society" and indignantly swore the state of freedom and democracy are best reserved to Filipinos themselves. "Our people know best. We Filipinos are the best experts on the Philippines."

Should Bunye perhaps care to hear the views of three such "experts"? They are Filipinos and they are senators, but they happen to agree with Freedom House: Senators Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Francis Escudero and Loren Legarda. Pimentel has noted how freedom has been diminished since the time of President Ramon Magsaysay, while Legarda denounced the restrictions in press freedom and the right to peaceful assembly.

It might help Bunye and other administration officials to form their own "expert" opinion on the true state of freedom and democracy in the Philippines if they would study how Freedom House defines a "partly free" country. Such a country, the organization says, is one where there is "limited respect for political rights and civil liberties" and one which "frequently suffers from an environment of corruption, weak rule of law, ethnic and religious strife and [where] a single political party enjoys dominance despite the facade of pluralism." Except for the last item, Freedom House might as well have tailor-made its description to Philippine conditions.

In fact, the grounds cited by the American organization for the poorer rating it gave to the Philippines don't tell even half of the horror story. For instance, while the survey speaks of "serious, high-level corruption allegations," it doesn't point out that the cases have mounted and the amounts involved have grown to shocking magnitudes. While it notes a spike in political killings during the 2004 elections, it doesn't mention the vote-buying and cheating that marred the polls. While it mentions the Estrada pardon, it makes no reference to the culture of impunity that has allowed the murderers of activists and journalists to remain free and continue their rampages and to big-time grafters enjoy their loot. Neither does it mention the administration's continuing attempt to intimidate its critics among the members of the press with threats of arrest and the use of "immutable force" against them. Nor does it highlight the most abominable of all: the extrajudicial killings of Left-leaning activists and journalists that remains unchecked.

Bunye is right: Filipinos know best. We don't need "outside forces" to tell us that democracy is in decline and freedom is in peril.

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Forgetting Edsa II

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

YESTERDAY, JAN. 20, WE MARK THE 7TH anniversary of Edsa II, the series of events that drove away a corrupt presidency from office. Because of the abusive and rent-seeking nature of the regime that succeeded it, many people who joined Edsa II have had problems celebrating it. Indeed, some of the opposition figures who became clients of Erap Joseph Estrada [Mr. Arroyo's No. Three to nothing to report, but there is a lot to learn from what happened.

Recently, I went through the newly exercise of re-viewing what I wrote in this column right after Edsa II. I've always believed that such reflection is a part of the duty of every writer who dares to comment on events in their midst. I cited recently if there is anything in what I wrote about those days that I would take back in the light of what I now know.

I distinctly remember writing three hopeful words a few hours after GMA was sworn in as the new president: The system won out. On following day, Jan. 21, 2001, "Yes the second time in our short history as a nation, we have averted our country from the pit of dictatorship. Once again we have shown the world that we could find our way out of the mess that our corrupt leaders turned us into, not through the inevitable fish that goddess always stinks in the end. What could have been else the unprecedented mob uprising Estrada, that seemed ramen-made as a mechanism of presidential succession, would lead us to another people power revolution?

"I never entertained the idea that we would actually survive a powerful president by impeaching him. My position was always for resignation, even if I knew that Estrada would never resign. When I write about Estrada in the present tense, but then I could never imagine the means for doing the endless worrying about the due consequences." A moment of hope and a night of mixed—I think that is what the column was trying to express.

The week after, on Jan. 28, 2001, amid the furor of revenues of Edsa II coming from its continued tactic, I defended the course that the events had taken while expressing the need for long-term reforms. "The immediate goal of People Power II was not to recall Use President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to power but to rid the country of a corrupt president who was destroying the nation. Whatever the successive orders of its participants may have about the next presidency, People Power II recognizes the legitimacy of the lawful succession. The long-term goal however is to reinvent the institutions of our public life so that our country may get out of the vicious circle of pervasive corruption, mal-governance in which it is trapped, and ensure its survival and progress in the modern competitive world."

Two weeks later, on Feb. 4, 2001, as the cost of abusing cold water on the celebrations, I warned that the new presidency appeared to have misunderstood the message of Edsa II. "Though it was not among its stated objectives, People Power II made it possible for Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to become president. It did not choose Ms. Macapagal, it gave her power, not to govern in a way that pleases her, but to draw the important distinction between those den Macapagal is among such does it continue to an obvious betrayal of oppressing individuals who could best personify the people's unresisting will to destroy the corrupt system in which she has been distributing Cabinet positions in politics into belonging to her coalition as if these were the spoils of war. . . .

"In fact, her televised televised message in November, she addressed those who might be planning to destabilize her administration and

warned against the use of "immutable force" against them. Nor does it highlight the most abominable of all: the extrajudicial killings of Left-leaning activists and journalists that remains unchecked.

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'Out of sight, out of mind'

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

THE ACCURACY OF THIS SAYING IS OBSCURED when the feared the Battalion Bataan to come back to imperial Manila after a month of running the Mindanao countryside, though on its promise to give them their due.

To refresh the memory: Gen. Emilio, the former colonel could find Bataleon in Manila, a request which took them two months and one day to accomplish. In person, their case for justice and to call the public's attention to their cause. They didn't have the money to take our full-page advertisements, but their cause was just.

What was their cause? They had been treated of 144 hectares of land in 1995 as part of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program, thanks to the efforts of then Agrarian Reform Secretary Ernesto Garilao, the only high government official in the army case who didn't try to screw them. But the land was taken from them by no less than Malacañang, which offered it instead to former owner Cojuangco, or Q for short so get back to why could be connected into an industrial park, cum development academy/ cum shopping mall/ cum eco-tourism spot—that, despite the fact that the land was under a legal prohibition on converting the land. So instead it was resigned. The Supreme Court then patently ruled in what could only be described as a long saga of those farmers; he not only denying against them on the basis of technicality (the filing and the like) but also, adding insult to injury, by saying that they were not qualified beneficiaries in the first place.

The farmers accepted the Supreme Court decision, no matter how bitter the pill. But then, their bombshell was that Q came out on top part of his conversion plan, instead, he sold the land to a subsidiary of San Miguel Corporation (SMC), which apparently was going to use it as a piggery. The law is very clear on the conversion from the conversion plan has to be approved by the DAR and the Department of Agriculture, and the conversion has to be finished within the years. Neither of these conditions were met, but SMC

with all the lawyers at its disposal, drama (guerrillas and good faith, incidentally, love Joe Estrada) "the acronym" of SMC and Q.

After the first appeal, the farmers asked for a reconsideration of the conversion plan, and for the cancellation of the land to Q. The industry parody allows anybody to file for reconsideration. They were given the runaround by Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman, in spite of the opinions of his underlings that SMC had no case in the matter.

And that is why the farmers camped their more than 1,000 kilometer march.

To me, as mature here only and powerful, my possible put a stern kitchen on a group of poor farmers who had been walking for two months and who had every right to be tired, to ask for their cause. They can take our paid ads or tolerate the farmers and remember their plight—practically making it easy to be the road to Bataleon's office. And they can try to get opinion makers to see things their way. But the way most of them will get to is instead the imagination of the public, and it was nothing we've ever done under the sun.

And so enters President Macapagal-Arroyo, in the role of a "lady knight" in shining armor. She met with the farmers on Dec. 17. On Dec. 18, Malacañang came out with an order revoking the conversion.

In fact, a victory for the good guys—their first in 10 years (the last time was when they undertook a hunger strike in front of the presidential palace and President Estrada decided to come up with this "win-win" solution that was rejected by the Supreme Court). My informa-

tion is that Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye even ran down a dialogue with the farmers because he was in a hurry to tee up the latest mala, wrong article was to deliver a copy of the Malacañang order to SMC.

The farmers were back home in time.

One month later, they are still waiting, watching helplessly as the SMC officers, in spite of the ruling above, are now planting their sugarcane in the 144 hectare area, seeing to speed up their construction activities on the site, building one pig house after another. As a matter of fact, it seems the corporation is now planning to has already spent in the neighborhood of P1 billion in improving the area—which is incredible, because as late as December last year, the improvements on the land were limited to three huts about P300 million. It may be a big project, but P300 million is not one that will take a year. It is clear to the farmers that the SMC affiliate's corporate strategy is to build as much as it can and then use that a shoulder to make as give up the land because they have already put in contracts.

And guess what? Apparently, Malacañang never received a letter-and-down order to San Miguel—why see, Mr. President? That was the obvious thing to do, if one sincerely believed that the farmers had suffered enough.

Not only that, it seems that Mr. Bunye was SMC's main spokesman on the Malacañang side, avoiding the conversion permit for ordinary mill—and SMC claims it was received only on Jan. 2 (and who can say when?) Truly engineered meal requires a receipt signature—and they have [illegible] or April. Jan. 17, to file an appeal.

Which Q apparently has done, going to the Supreme Court, questioning the conversion revocation order and there has a glimmer of hope given the Chief Justice's statements and actions. Q's case might be given the set aside.

Meanwhile the farmers are here, fighting on as the face of ungodly, superior and good. They need our wholehearted support.

Comments: e-public.first@gmail.com

Will education be our future?

LAST WEDNESDAY, SEN. EDGARDO J. ANGARA spoke on "Education is our future" at the former U. Dragon annex theater to lecture at the Ateneo de Manila University's Rockwell campus. I was a classmate of the lecturer.

I said that I agree with almost everything Senator Angara said—the global context, the statistics, and certainly with the factor that education is the key to our future. The only point I disagree with is at our heads for "success." Business only needs desk when projects do not produce a very high rate of return. When social returns are not well captured by business, projects are better done by non-business interests.

I told that non-business should already have been on personal, if the call for a quantum leap in investments in science, technology and innovation had already been heeded by the government two decades ago, when made by former UP President Emil P. Q. Quisumbing, and others.

My question, "Will education be our future?" is really asking whether will the government accept the responsibility, pay the cost, and follow the principles of good governance in undertaking the needed investments in education. To all—including, in the public sector, the executive, the government-private sector or the business sector—that is responsible for the major part of elementary and high school education, graduate school training, and research, investment. If colleges trainings are not well-supported by business, projects are better done by non-business interests.

Except the cost. The first point, the cost, is very well worth paying. Senator Angara's statement one percent of GNP for research and development (R&D) is the same as the one that Neal Industrialization Law. Their employees, such as the University of the Philippines, should have academics to set their own internal salary scales. For that reason, the UP management should be known as a salary scale to use such field of specialization?

SOCIAL CLIMATE

Mahar Mangahas

It is not just you would (U.S. would mobilizing very many very qualified people very like. We should think global, and recruit not only Filipinos but also all other nationalities, as do Singapore, Saudi Arabia, and, of course, the United States. Let us look for talented scientists from Africa, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, South Asia, Southeast Asia and Latin America who want to emigrate for their detailed visas by pioneer investments of political reasons. Let us prioritize young and talented scientists, many of whom, through technology and biology will naturally find Filipino parents. Let us give them family visas in order to encourage them to settle down here.

Revolving private institutions. My third point is that the government should support research in private institutions also. If these universities can bid for supported to contain research solely on the basis of tuition fees. Under market rules, interest revenues will be earned only if we wait some time only and not the costs of research in the short.

Not more than half of a research professor's time should be for teaching. The research time, particularly for basic research, should be funded by the government and philanthropic sources, the Ateneo de Manila University Foundation, the US government agency that supports fundamental research and education in all non-medical fields of science and engineering, funds both public and private research on the basis of competitive proposals—as can be seen from its 1964 grant that led to the development of the search engine Google as founded University while in there.

The whole world is competing for scientists. Education will be our future when the government invests in basic PhD billion per year in it, more modern science-supporting incentives, and makes one of the circle research community. When will that be?

* * *

Contact SMS: www.sen.org.ph or mahar@mahar.globe@sen.org.ph.

Quitting

I remember it through the rain, I am sound up once again to my own and I know that I'm doing enough to mend...

I HAVE NOW CONFESSED MYSELF TO BE A WRITER. IT is hard for me to make up a story outline, a plot, a scene, but sometimes do have their own powers. Power, which enable or disable.

I was blessed with a lot of things. A lot which I felt I did not deserve and yet I do.

Mornings didn't stop. I remember a lot of mistakes, and I still do, but still I am blessed.

YOUNG BLOOD

Marco Davalos R. Garcia

Waking up early for a blessing, I am blessed with life. Taking three times a day is a blessing. I am blessed with food. To have loving parents and siblings are a blessing. I am blessed with a family leaving and spending time with people I know is a blessing. I am blessed with friends.

Having days and go. When they come, we welcome them. When they go, the memory of being blessed stays forever.

I was hurt. I think I was mad. I did bad things but still I was blessed.

I still counted when I began to feel up with my work. I felt unappreciated. I know I will never be the perfect employee, much less a perfect person, but I believe that I can do things. I believe I mean it, and I am never be the boss for some, but I am my I was able to achieve things, things that made me proud. I didn't want to be put on a pedestal for those things, I just wanted to be appreciated. I know I had my lapses. I am deeply regretted, but we can never change the past, we can just learn from the future.

I am a person who wants to get things right and it helps to ask a lot. I asked for help, guidance and permission. Some people hate being asked, others don't. Asking for me is not a sign of having poor decision skills, rather it is being decisive. Many won't agree, but I am right when I say that I am a very good person and in the end you make good of decisions? So, I asked.

Well, asking got me a lot of things—many things I only dreamed of, I don't want to brag, but asking turned out to be rewarding. I became president of our college, after I asked. For some, I won two scholarship cities, after I asked for support. I got to be where I am today, Friends, and Mom for free, after I asked for sponsorships. I got into a multinational company, after I asked for most.

So I asked. Am I starting to ask?

I wanted to chalk my paradigm, make a move, the before I know it... I was hurt and I hurt myself. I smeared my own pain, I wanted it to stop, not quit. I resigned.

I kept it a secret to some, and to others, I told what I really felt. I asked for support and I got also. I felt weak, I have belief in myself, and I felt like to learn. I knew I wasn't sure, but my emotions told me so.

I don't know when I came come, but I know I did something right. I gave myself a break, a break from being stressed badly. Some said I made a wrong move by quitting, yes, quitting. It can be a bad thing but it can also be a good thing. I quit to preserve my sanity. Some said leaving that company was a mark. Some said running away. Whatever they said, I'm good, proclaimed, low-balled, stressed badly and disappointed to a bad? No, I should have fought and showed them my worth, but I was here. I was not thinking clearly.

I can vividly remember, walking out of the building on my last day. I looked back, and I cried. I cried for the feelings, knowing there was no turning back. I was under the rain and I felt other running down my cheeks. I asked myself, are these tears of relief or tears of fear?

I couldn't think clearly for days. I was feeling bitter to myself. What happened to the person I used to be? Was I still there?

Another fear was knowing mean me. Being an elementary I felt I couldn't handle. I felt small. I didn't believe in myself even if many reminded me to do so. I assured so, but I couldn't.

I moved down on my house. I cried and I asked for help. Help, I got.

I did my best to bring back my wise in me. The "me" I know I was. I hated the attitude and wish. Thinking I was back on track felt good. I had felt worthless. Then I realized that I wasn't. I was back to something and I knew it very well.

Hey you, I am not wrong. I'm be with ghosts by (lowercase), but I know I can stand up. I was given another break, another road to someone. I have learned a lot, but I know I will learn more. I may quit again, but what is important is that I get back up when I fall.

I will prove my worth. I will.

Marco Davalos R. Garcia, 27, wrote this piece six years ago after a difficult experience with a multinational company. He now lives in Canada with his wife Mardy and their daughter Monica.

Let me count the ways ... reading tips

THE RALLYING CRY OF THE BOOKWORM OLD-ies (Bibliophiles Foundation, INC), in the midst of declining a nation of readers, does seem an ambitious goal when one considers the limitations of the present public school system.

To endeavor to promote the love and habit of reading among grammar school students when libraries in many schools are nearly "bare," or nonexistent because of limited budgets, may appear derailed from reality. Yet, just like Sisyphus in Greek mythology and his eternal curse which sentenced him to roll a huge boulder up a hill only to see it roll down, I cannot help but try.

Even as we in SAS are somewhat encouraged that, from 1999 to the present, our 31-day Reading Program for Grade 1 students has reached over 500 schools and directly benefited over 100,000 students, we know all too well that we have limited this fact to those under public school system.

But this is all too familiar. Do we just continue to lament about all the those we? What to single-out right in public schools? Let me count the ways... I analyze documenting answers and posters. Is "reading" to understand by a democratic device to [illegible]?

It is far easier to throw up our arms and give up, but something tells us that we should not myself such a cowardly way out.

Miguel Bernas, a friend of mine, hands a disarming challenge. "I'm not amused" as an avid reader, but he says no amount of reading campaigns will bail [illegible] habit to students, and book donations will go [illegible] because they will only end up in second-hand stores.

While I respect Miguel's decision to [illegible], I find it difficult to leave such assertion as final. Let us reform on reading and the many ills in things can turn can do to encourage [illegible]. Here are some of those things (book type) many of them come from celebrity readers. Teachers

COMMENTARY

Neni Sta. Romana Cruz

must of "reading theater" with find these specs leveling and helpful for those remaining three months of the school year.

1. Build up confidence in students. Boy Abunda credits his urge to [illegible] to his mother, a middle-school teacher of 43 years who told him to be positive for reading.

2. Reading of fairy tales is important to children because it prepares them to the realities of life. In magical fantasy, past and present-day blend of Ate Lea in the laboratory, take "room" monster or poetic day and reading is book a week.

3. Children should be given the chance to express about their society and their journey. Dr. Ninotchka Cambaza, National Artist for Literature and Magsaysay founder, says books promote love of country.

4. With good storytelling, children get hooked on reading and the world of books. Bridget Pascual, veteran actor, reminds teachers of their special responsibility to make books come alive in their classrooms.

5. Encourage kids to read. The art of reading is having fun as kids get distressed with iPods, the Internet and TV. Ferdinand Cabrera, director of Senior School, says the best antipersonal with media can be overcome.

6. Bridgend Children shares their inspiration from picture readers. Broadcast journalist Karen Davila remembers teachers their ability to make their readers reach out for the room.

7. Books let you see the world and sometimes still better light. We become a better person through reading. Sociologist and columnist Randy Dacuycuy says reading helps develop empathy and [illegible] for others.

8. It "can only shape people by the way you were shaped. His mother made him the love of reading if you yourself don't have it in you. Dindo "Sir Digo" Pegangiran, well-loved literary fellowship and [illegible] mentor, stresses this basic.

9. Inspire classroom discussion by reading reading. Your body to your love visual aid. Dr. Rhonda Abad, professor and artist, has even used an umbrella and a ladies' handbag while teaching—primarily to capture their attentions.

10. Make your classroom reading-friendly. Even when we ourselves do not read? Dr. Bienvenido Lumbera, National Artist for Literature and Magsaysay awardee, says books promote love of country.

11. Motivate kids can be a stepping stone to reading. John Silva, writer and broadcast veteran, strongly recommends field trips to innovation saloon than TV shows.

To promote museum consciousness, Mona Pasilan-Delgado is hosting the Ateneo Children's Museum Conference on Feb. 23-24 at the Manila Hotel with the theme, "Children's Museums as Bridges of Peace." There will be a special session on books and storytelling. For more details visit the conference website www.ateneodemanila.org/ateneo or send [illegible] to 4005758.

* * *

Neni Sta. Romana Cruz is a member of the Philippine Board on Books for Young People and a trustee of the Sir Alkiet Sotkor Foundation. Email contributions to neni@gmail.com.

The next DOJ target: the next big bout

THE BIG DEAL IS THAT JUAN MIGUELANS AT a boxing gym near the border of Quezon City and San Juan are dreading end when could be a dream match. Sorry, the fight will not have anything to do with boxing icon Manny Pacquiao. But it could be just as big—in the literal sense, that is—as a Pacman slugfest. It would pit the two heavyweight sons of Joseph Estrada, Jinggoy and JV.

Both the senators say the bout was merely set caught up in the boxing craze, and never it was at the same boxing gym. Together are all-too aware of the bad blood that exists between the two sons of the deposed president, who authorities never seem to see the guns at the same time. At least one thing only needs an idea: "Why don't they settle their differences in the ring?"

But insiders observers surmised that the dream bout, if ever it would happen, would take some time. The reasons: caution. The "action star" that is Jinggoy is stopped in short term boxing recently during a not-so-heavy workout, probably because of his schedule as Erap's junior public servant. He had trained JV in a more frequent gym on and has taken part in an actual boxing competition.

A bout at this point, the last said, could be too, with Jinggoy getting too much to lose perhaps the loss will have at least until both boxers get more staying power—at least exercise.

C. Espinosa

* * *

BEST BEHAVE BAIL GONZALES. Appearances, it is not said, the member's attorney class financially reliable Justice Secretary Raul Gonzales is concerned with. The behavior of clients/lawyers is also on his mind.

Boxing a recent interview, Gonzales was asked whether the alleged multi-billion-peso heist machinated to was connected with a supposed plan of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines to come out with a stronger statement against the government. (The bishops' letter to present election voice a year in January and in July.) The secretary said he did not know.

But, characteristically, he did not stop there. He added that he actually wants the CBCP to come out with a strong statement—a reminder for people to dress properly when they come

BETWEEN DEADLINES

to worship in church.

"What I want them [to do] is to come out with a pastoral letter telling the parishioners to go to church not to take shirts. Shirtless Christ nude. Pantaloons nako nawala nako shirt pants. There's no shirtless nude. They come to side in slippers, in short pants," he said.

And then the clincher: "Mahirap pa ng mga restaurants nag dress nain (Even restaurants have a dress code)."

I. Sabayrosa

* * *

THE HAZARDS OF COVERAGE. If the Black Nazarene feast was a security nightmare, try playing paparazzi to Amerithrob actors like Nora Aunor and Sam Milby. The celebrities, who stopped a PTA audience filled with agitated mothers and screaming Lolo fans for pictures and autographs, were personally mobbed by fans and officiators at the Manila City Hall where the boxing ops on the third case unscheduled.

The third beating, however, proved to be more difficult. Not even professional celebrities Jinggoy Estrada were spared "rational"—Angel Locsin, Rico Antonio and Dolvong. Security area on right at the session had the show for artists' ballet body guards barred even journalists who were City Hall regulars from covering the event. Reporters, were personally mobbed by fans and officiators at the Manila City Hall where the boxing ops on the third case unscheduled.

* * *

BOAST FROM THE PAST. From the Jan. 23, 1998 issue of the Philippine Daily Inquirer:

The value of the peso against the US dollar is expected to fall to P35 before the end of the first quarter, principally because of increased demands for greenbacks as banks start paying maturing letters of credit (LC) for imports.

He said some US officials are saying that many banks have been [illegible] a speculative trend and had been stockpiling this foreign [currency] in apparent anticipation of exchange rate movements.

We don't go by the banks' example and hoard your own dollars because the OI is smarter than them. The OI will has the capability of regulating the rate to its own advantage.

In short, hide treasury hope.

YOUNG BLOOD

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twenty-something set. Below—Ed.

IN THE NEWS

Franklin Drilon

The INQUIRER is a member of the PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
(47 Intramuros Bldg., 007 Bonifacio St.
Near Luna / Quirino Sts., Intramuros, Manila)

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permit/s.

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/ Citizenship	Position
GALAXY TRADING LTD. CO.	Qingfeng Wang (China)	Marketing Manager
GALAXY TRADING LTD. CO.	Bo Wang (China)	Designing Manager
GALAXY TRADING LTD. CO.	Yongxi Ouyang (China)	Logistics Manager
INTEGRATIVE CENTER FOR ALTERNATIVE DEVT. FOUNDATION INC.	Dexter Zuller (Liberia)	Liaison Language Teacher
INTEGRATIVE CENTER FOR ALTERNATIVE DEVT. FOUNDATION INC.	Md Kagol (Liberia)	Math Teacher
INTEGRATIVE CENTER FOR ALTERNATIVE DEVT. FOUNDATION INC.	Bernadette Kargol (Liberia)	Chemistry Teacher
JSC PHILIPPINES, INC.	Hiroyuki Kyokawa (Japan)	Assistant Manager of (ABACA Project)
CITIBANK, N.A.	Siti Widiastuti Nadia Rahmawati (Indonesia)	Credit Specialist / Analyst for Global Consumer Group
REAL ESSO TRADING CO., INC.	Alfonso Gil (Mexico)	Technical Consultant
REAL ESSO TRADING CO., INC.	Shaochou Hung (Taiwan)	Technical Consultant
KEN LANGUAGE INSTITUTE, INC.	Ai Chen Lee (Taiwan)	Consultant
MINDEX TOP LIMITED MANILA REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE	Hiroyuki Kuwada (Japan)	Office Representative Manager
DISCOVERY LANGUAGE EXCELLENCE ACADEMY, INC.	Jinshuang Yan (Taiwan)	Marketing Manager

If you have any observation/objection to the above mentioned application please communicate with the Regional Director.

ARMANDO G. ARRIESGADO
OIC, Regional Director

Chef as 'National Artist'

DOES OUR COUNTRY HAVE A NATIONAL DISH for the culinary arts? The thought occurred to me while I was having breakfast and reading newspaper articles about acquired comedian Dolphy Quizon being recommended by Senator Pimentel Manuel Villar for the Order of National Artists.

When I did some checking, I was disappointed to learn that the culinary arts are not among the categories in our country's National Artists award system. The other important arts are there but not culinary arts which involves practical doing, and not just limited to the fields of music and dance. I am also disappointed to learn that much needs to be done in terms of scholarly research on our culinary heritage. Most of the available culinary books are recipe and procedure books, while some are on points of numerous manuals and some are on nutrition-teaching materials.

The Tanore considers the culinary arts as part of intangible cultural heritage under the domain of "social practices, rituals and festive events." The Philippines is one of the 87 States Parties to the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The Artists' Act stipulates a multi-sensory experience of a people's culture and traditions. Centers helps define cultural identity. Historians and anthropologists give high value to accounts of the culinary practices of nations and to articles about the production, preparation, processes, uses and consumption of food and drink.

Many Filipinos gifted with culinary creativity and ingenuity have given themselves over the art of seasoned and sustained accolades, respect and admiration. I recall that a Filipino chef is quite a fine chef in the West. Thousands of young Filipinos are choosing careers in the culinary arts. Enrollment in culinary courses and hotel and restaurant management programs are up.

There are already in place procedural provisions and guidelines about the National Artists awards. Maybe these could be amended to include culinary arts in the awards. The Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) and the Tanore of Culture and Arts (NCCA) or other bodies (NGOs) would know how to go about this. If done word changing, then artisans and non-governors should act on them. I believe this matter is infused with national interest because culinary aspect of the national patrimony.

Some of our culinary traditions might already be on their way to being lost to modern culture. Recently we had figured-off-cars serve our indigenous culinary heritage. A National Artist for the Culinary Arts will be a great inspiration for preserving and promoting the culinary heritage of the Philippines. Such a honored artist will be able to help raise funds for, and even lead, research projects relative to Philippine cuisine.

—ARLYN VICTOR L. ARRIESGADO
lavictor419171@yahoo.com

When times call for priests to go into politics

I REFER TO GERARDLE W. DIOT WITH THE EDITORIAL titled "Priests in power" (Inquirer, 1/12/06) which said that Bishop Leonardo Medroso did right in canvassing votes for priests against doing it here. Ed Doblin: "There is no more need to issue pastoral." Medroso was quoted as saying:

I think the good bishop is wrong, and so are all the other bishops who say the same. They talk in circumlocutions, but what Canon Law allows priests to take action in situations where the well-being of the laity is in danger. Except for Canon Law, there is no biblical or theological basis to abstain priests from politics. Moreover, canon law is a political injunction. It is a purely disciplinary law, similar to the law that bans priests from marrying. If they could, maybe, too many priests would run for political office, or for that matter, they would get married.

The bishops have impossible hurdles to penalty (celibate) Bishops by supposedly canonical breaches. He cannot exercise his priestly ministry? Why not? Is there a contradiction between the two—the priest and the politician? So, that Bishop has shown to a priest who must leadership a position, even in the extraordinary circumstances of Pampanga. Clearly he is driven as opposed to the purpose of the Holy Spirit.

I agree with the suggestion of Father Franklin that bishops and priests should prepare for projects for responsible politics. But it is not so in Pampanga, due to an extraordinary circumstances, the whole country is. Not only the people of Pampanga are in moral danger, the entire Filipino people are indeed in moral danger. This would not have been the case if only the bishops and priests in their divine mandate to be prophetic witnesses.

I would like to quote here a few words spoken by the late Archbishop Oscar Romero of San Salvador 18 years ago: "It is very easy to be neutral and to say that one is above the world, a spiritual word, a word without any connection with history, a word that could sound in any place of the world — that is one of the responsibilities, diotel's call to us now. But Pilar reminds us, the conflicts and persecutions, what really is a sign of true Church, is the Word that proclaims and denounces, bearing as the words of the prophets. The Word that announces to the people of God the mysteries of God's life. And that denounces and believes who obstruct the Kingdom of God, so that this hate may not die, but rise from their tombs, from their political sanctuaries that oppress, corrupt and harm the rights of God and of mankind." Blessed Oscar's position on Dec. 10, 1977.

If the bishops in our land spoken that prophetic Word, the country today would not be in such a miserable condition, our political system would not have been this corrupt and, most of all, the moral and ethical decadence would not have been taken to unbelievable and tragic ridiculous heights.

—ARMAND SWEET
PO Box 137, Cagayan de Oro City

Key to real growth no longer a secret

WE HAVE BEEN HEARING VARIOUS CLAIMS for our failure to move forward. Some point to graft and corruption as the reason for the decline in the ability of Filipinos to speak the English language. Meanwhile, national problems are getting worse.

Developed countries have shown that population, like poverty, rapid population growth and low-quality education largely disappear as a nation achieves real growth through science and technology (S&T). For example, America's huge economic success comes from innovation, which is fueled by research in science and technology as well as by graduate education. They nurture the untold essentials of development—research, science and technology.

Relying on these development requisites, the Philippines created a science development fund in 1958, transformed it into an S&T authority, and finally elevated it to the Department of Science and Technology. Yet from being the most progressive Asian country in the 1960s, second only to Japan, we are now behind as low-than-10 Asian economies. Why?

The rapid growth of China is not surprising because so many Chinese leaders are scientists and engineers by training," a science publication noted in its June 3, 2005 editorial. When, in its one country, even leading officials of the National Research Council of the Philippines, National Academy of Science and Technology, and the Department of Science and Technology have been merely non-scientists.

—ALEX M. LACSAMANA,
ordained professor of marine science,
University of the Philippines, Diliman
Alex_lacsamana@yahoo.com

Writing on the wall

PRESIDENTIAL WANNABES ARNEL(O) ARANETA can all hope that the 2010 presidential elections will even take place.

Already, Congress is flexing its muscles to initiate (or is it "explore"?) moves to amend the Constitution so that the country can shift to a parliamentary system. Hon. Rodolfo Biazon says "all sanity prevails all our support for these moves so that the no constitutionally disqualified candidates can run for prime minister. He vetoed lackeys, lapdogs and loyalists in Congress will make sure the rules will prefer himself.

An answer to all presidential hopefuls. Read the last lines in old and popular song: "You don't have to paint me a picture, the handwriting's on the wall."

—EDUARDO ROCHA,
jesusjudeusrosa@yahoo.com

INQUIRER Visayas

An ancestral house for many seasons

By Jaime B. Bulanhot
Cebu City

IN THE HEART OF THE BUSTling city of Cebu stands a 300-year-old ancestral house, slowly restored to its magnificence.

Built sometime between 1675 and 1700, the two-story wooden house of the Yap-Sandiego clan occupies a 2,500-square-meter lot on Mabini and Lopez Jaena Streets in Barangay Cleon.

It belonged to the family of Doña María Yap, great maternal grandmother of exiled Cebuano choreographer and art collector Val Sandiego. The exiled Don Mariano Sandiego, a retired diplomat, is the last 17th-c.

Val decided to restore the structure, which had been used as a boarding house, after his uncle and aunt agreed to turn it over to him in 2003.

The house, made of narra and other hardwood and roofed with wooden tiles, was already deteriorating and some parts were about to collapse, he recalled. It "was already leaning in a downhill" as an adjacent building and it was also sinking. It was really not saving the house in such a condition," he said.

Limited funds

With limited funds, Val decided to do the restoration himself together with a team carpenters. He searched the Internet for information on how to go about it, and the work started three years ago.

"It was a very tough challenge. I wanted to restore the house because that is something we Cebuanos or even Filipinos should be very proud of. This is at least three centuries old and it is still preserved," Val said.

The first major repair involved the leaking roofing. The wooden tiles were removed and reinstalled piece by piece, said Ibara Vallejo Sil, the carpenter.

Despite the hard work and lack of support from expert resources, Vallejo considers his job a labor of love.

"I do the restoring of the old roofing shoes, with Val's supervision. I do delicate carpenter works just to make sure the house will stand sturdy and I am pleased that we did it little by little. Look at the house now, it seems the restoration is almost complete," he said.

Val said the restoration had already cost about P1 million and was about 60 percent complete.

To raise funds, Val opened the place to tourists last month. About 250 visitors have appeared since.

Theme concepts

To make the Yap-Sandiego abode more interesting, Val thought of several concepts. In December, it was lighted up for the Christmas season and had life-sized replicas of carols on the grounds.

Since the "Sinulog" is Cebu's most popular festival this month, Val transformed the house into a backdrop for his Sto. Niño collection, including an image from Belgium worn made in the 1800s and four 1700-century wooden icons coming from Bohol.

Sto. Niño accessories, such as the sya, crowns made of leather or coconut, and photos, have also been preserved.

Val plans to feature the Cleanco Nine Feet drama in February as his dance will be performed, and the Independence Day theme in June (with Philippine flags as display).

In July, he will feature the Feast of St. John the Baptist, patron saint of Farms. Fr. Santiago Dionisio Tamayo will perform the martyrdom of the saint.

Antique items

The house also has other attractions, such as centuries-old tables and chairs, cabinets, jars, lamps, candlesticks, wall clocks, mirrors, chandeliers, and canopy windows carved with portraits of the Holy Family and the archangels.

A huge mirror from the Ming Dynasty dating back to 1400 is also a standout. In order, along with other ancient pieces like from the Yuan and Ching dynasties in the 1500s.

Val's commitment to the restoration work has inspired his friends to help protect the house. A long-time buddy, Jose Aquiles Sycuncon, said: "We are proud of Sandiego. With our 20 years of friendship, I now to keep the dedication and commitment to his craft as an artist and collector. He is truly concerned. He loves this house so much."

Another friend also suggested that Val seek funding assistance from an association of expatriates in Belgium.

Val already feels a sense of achievement. "This is the legacy I will be leaving to the Cebuanos. This is my gift to all the Cebuanos. This is not the end but the beginning of the story. They will be proud of their heritage," he said.

LAST Christmas, the ancestral house was lighted up and had life-sized replicas of carols on the ground. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

AN INTERIOR of the house shows an antique table and other antique accessories like candle holders.

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Across the NATION

2 workers die in Hanjin shipyard blast in Subic

OLONGAPO CITY—TWO WORKERS DIED WHILE three others were injured in an explosion yesterday inside a South Korean shipbuilding plant off Redondo Bay in Subic, Zambales, police said.

Jeremias Adanza, 38, and Mario Lacsamana, 29, both employees of the Hanjin Heavy Industries and Construction, Inc., died in the explosion that rocked Hanjin's assembly shop no. Dry Dock/No. 3 accident 11:30 a.m.

Three other workers—Jonathan Mariores, 38, Gilbert Ferrer, 29, and Donard Digio, 28—were brought to a hospital here for treatment.

Accident

Supt. Cesar Jacob, Subic police chief, said initial investigations showed that an ember from an iron rod that was being welded might have dropped onto an oily part of the floor.

The fire was initially thought to have triggered a fire and the succeeding explosion, Jacob said.

Armscor Arroza, Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority administrator, said an investigation of the explosion was necessary to determine whether thought and its enforcement had been remiss in the implementation of safety measures at the work site.

"We regret the incident and sympathize with the families of those who were killed," said Jung Ki Pyeong, general manager of the Subic facility, in a statement.

"We reiterate our commitment to ensuring the safety of the workers, whether they are working with the subcontractor or not."

2nd fatal accident

This was the second accident known to have happened at Hanjin since it operated in Subic in late 2006.

The first, which happened on Dec. 24 last year, involved a welder who died after he fell from a crane driven by a fellow employee.

Hanjin committed to invest $1.6 billion in Subic, making it the single biggest investment in the Philippines in 2005. When fully operational, it said it planned to hire 15,000 workers.

It set up dry docks at Subic Bay Freeport's Redondo Bay near eight coastal villages of Subic town.

Last year, a malaria outbreak plagued at least 313 workers and residents in and around the shipbuilding facility.

But officials of the Department of Health in Central Luzon said the outbreak had been controlled.

A DOH report said Hanjin, its subcontractors, and the local and provincial governments would have to take measures to prevent future epidemics because media so far has been forced to be "vigilant" in the area. —Rambo Dreyfus and Norbert Joaquin, Inquirer Central Luzon

A CASINO right in the heart of Angeles City's business district.

Protests can't stop casino, says owner

ANGELES CITY—A CASINO besieged by pickets from school officials and students here cancelled its scheduled opening yesterday.

But the casino license holder, Emmanuel Jacinto, said it was not because of the protests.

Jacinto's casino is within the city's University belt.

He said he was expecting the mayor's permit to be released next week and that was the only reason the casino opening was put on hold despite its announcement through newspaper ads there.

But Dr. Emmanuel Angeles, chancellor of the Angeles University Foundation, said Jacinto would not get what he wants.

Angeles said Alex Duarte and Andy Linares, managers of Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.—an casinos in Barangay Salapungan, the building owners told the truth.

Angeles said he was waiting for Pagco's official communication on the controversy on Friday.

He said he would hold the filing of a petition for a temporary restraining order against Pasiga until Pagco's request arrives.

Angeles said he also lobbied with Mayor Pasiga Representatives not to issue Pasiga a permit. The mayor could not be reached on Friday.

The main point in the dispute stems from the casino's location.

Jacinto said the casino was 200 meters from the 40.0 and this, he said, was still far correct by the city engineer's office.

But Angeles said the casino was 150 meters from the ALS 30 campus of the Philippine Christian University extension campus, 100 meters from the Montessori School and 50 meters from churches of the Iglesia ni Cristo and the Archdiocese of San Fernando.

"Whether it is 150 [meters] or 200 [meters] is more than that, a casino for any religious establishment should not be near our academic institutions," Angeles said.

He said parents have arranged for office with lawyers of contracts.

Pagco was still validating the documents, said Cindy King, the firm's public relations officer. She confirmed that Pagco gave Pasiga a certificate to operate but said it could the license holder pay its business permit.

Jacinto said he would not back off. "All of our papers are legal and in order. Hindi ako pasisiko sa gitnaan lang. It will set a precedent [for other businesses]," he said.

The AM student council warned of a "massive demonstration" over Jacinto's project with Duarte Group Inc., Inquirer Central Luzon

Green courts raise hopes for Marinduque

BOAC, MARINDUQUE—JASON vironment watchdog have started planning in hopes on a Supreme Court order creating environmental courts to finally convict former executives of a mining firm that had spilled 1.6 million cubic meters of mine tailings into the Boac River.

The river is now biologically dead as a result of the leak.

On March 24 of that year, a plug of a drainage tunnel of the Marcopper Mining Co. (MMC) collapsed, halting 4 million cubic meters of mine wastes into the river.

The United Nations had declared the river biologically dead only a month after the spill.

Miguel Magalona, executive secretary of the Marinduque Council for Environmental Concerns, said the designation of green courts was a welcome development in the 11-year-old criminal case against MMC executives.

On April 11, 1996, the government filed criminal cases against MMC executives Adin Eric Lasala, president and chief executive officer; Steven Paul Reid, resident manager; and Pedro Hernandez, mine manager for maintenance.

Gerald Gene R. Quevedo, Inquirer Southern Luzon

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Marinduque through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), hereby announces intention to apply for eligibility and, if found eligible, to bid for:

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1 unit 10 bags capacity, Rotary/Fixed Centrifugal Quality control video camera with automatic gamma control, electronic exposure control, 12 spec bags bucket volume 8 x 2000 ml bags - 8 for 4th degree to centralized installation consumption 10 x 1 x 10 x 100 x 100 x 100 - Net - 25 T (± 10 PS) Flow 40 cubic meters per hour (CMH) manufacturer's options, installation by supplier service engineer on site free of charge, duly made with the manufacturer input compliance on the installation of equipment, Training, On site technical procedure of operation and proper maintenance of the equipment by the supplier.

1 unit Cooling Capacity Freezer 200 bags capacity, temperature range 1 - 10 degree C to 5 degree C to -30 degree C, heavy duty construction, insulated in place insulation, carefully designed refrigeration system and input point door gasket.

1 unit Platelet Agitator - 10 Random bags capacity, pre-store centralized drawers of non-any standard loading for uniform air circulation with reflect over globes that allow the drawer storage position to agitate, pre-set time control, Dimensions (mm): table mounted, top panel agitation drawer, Compatible or platelet incubator. Dimension: 10 x 10 x 10 x

FAA awed by RP air traffic controllers

From page A1

"We are working under conditions with outdated equipment, personnel shortages and very low morale," he told the Inquirer.

According to the ATCC source, he and his colleagues have been ordered to work overtime to help ease the shortage.

"Working in the ATCC scene is like they have not received their overtime pay for a year, Miranda said.

ATCO Executive Director Ismael Delagdito admitted the lack of ATCOs, and said 70 new recruits might soon be deployed in some of the busiest airports around the country.

As for the delay in the ATCC overhaul project, Delagdito said the budget had not been disbursed by the Transportation Department's (DOTC) Bids and the ATCO awaits all its earnings.

Gone to greener pastures

Miranda said many ATCOs had left the service for better-paying jobs abroad. He added that because ATC who headed a job as a Head of Stations staffers, earning enough dollars to make frequent vacations to the Philippines.

"Whenever I see something like that, you can't help but be tempted to think about doing the same. One wonders were so many senior ATCs are leaving... Why will he tell it costs the new ones?"

Working below the standards of the International Civil Aviation Organization Board, ATCs carry out their duties in cramped briefings and unhealthy as the 50-acre Against Extremists and Natural Disaster (Nida) display extended shifts and delayed overtime pay.

The Philippines' failure to comply with late safety standards has prompted the US Federal Aviation Administration to downgrade the country's aviation safety rating to Category 2 from Category 1, or below global aviation standards.

Working under stress

"When it's already your tenth or eleventh hour on duty, sometimes there are the memory lapses," said another ATC, who asked for anonymity for lack of authority to speak on the country.

"The constant attention to an operating cable because we are already tired. But we are able to control that immediately because we are already used to it and we do our best despite the mental stress."

In a top given shift, the Manila Tower is manned below five controllers, three Miranda's are traffic of around 100 flights (departures and arrivals) per day , the less recommended as to seven ATCs per shift.

Lack of manpower

But, available manpower per shift only five to be of the lower during the 8-hour shifts, three, do said.

"Like in the day shift from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., we need seven people but only five are available. So two people have to take an overtime. So the 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. shift, the four-man recommended have an hour or only require five. Five midnight there is only four, when there should be six," Miranda said.

To avoid burning ATCs beyond their limits, the Manila Tower allows controllers to rest after every two hours of work and then shift them around.

The undermanned ATC seems has to grapple with the lack of safety-threatening infrastructure, and unveils continuously for hour, a recurring

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2. To retrieve: Call the retrieval code included in the SMS alert or dial: *9900(country code)(area code)(cellphone no.)
   Ex: Dial *8900966509244444
3. To reply: Press "1" upon message retrieval then follow voice prompts.

*Up to January 19, 2008

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Bunevacz ex-partners have 15 days to respond to charges

By Tina G. Santos

FIVE MEN ACCUSED OF MANhandling former decathlete Ilsen Bunevacz have 15 days to answer charges against them, the National Bureau of Investigation said yesterday.

Joan Sheila Villareza, counsel for Bunevacz's business partners Teresa Ong, Cedric Lee, Louie Ken, Chito Ho and Joe Dominguez Ayden, went to the NBI yesterday on behalf of his clients in response to a subpoena issued by the bureau.

Bunevacz filed with the NBI last month charges of physical injuries, grave threats and coercion against them, the National Bureau of Investigation said yesterday.

Villareza told reporters, "My clients are not aware what exactly the complaint is. What appeared in the papers might not be an accurate reflection of the actual complaint. That's why we (have) a proper to wait for a subpoena so we can answer the accusations properly."

Bunevacz, former president of Beverly Hills SPM Cosmetic Surgery and Skin Institute, a high-end beauty clinic on Ayala Avenue, Makati City, alleged that the respondents maltreated him and forcibly took his Porsche, an expensive watch and cell phone sometime in November. In a statement to the business, the former athlete, insisted he is still president of the clinic.

The NBI also reports Bunevacz's wife, Jessica Bridgman, to submit a statement regarding alleged threats she had been receiving through text messages.

Rodriguez, a former model and talent manager, reportedly started to handle promotions and publicity for the clinic.

ALL THAT GLITTERS
A Chinese businessman was arrested by police yesterday after he was accused by a colleague of paying off a P1.4-million debt with fake jewelry (above). Police warned the public to beware of fake gems that could be seen in the market. ALEXIS JAVIER

3 brothers face murder raps

Victim allegedly killed suspects' sibling

By Nancy C. Carvajal

THREE BROTHERS ARE BEING HUNTED BY AUthorities for allegedly shooting to death yesterday afternoon a 17-year-old boy in Caloocan City.

Police identified the victim as John Ray Castro of No. 9 Tabing Street, Barangay 31, May-roo.

The suspects were identified as Rizaldo, Ricardo and Rolito Santiago of Sitio-pulo, Barangay 35, Caloocan City.

Murder charges have been filed against the brothers in the city's prosecutor's office. Police are also looking for Bernardo Victor who was allegedly with the brothers when the shooting happened.

Police investigators PO2 Carlos Almario and Joel Montalvan said the brothers were apparently out to avenge the death of one other brother, who was allegedly killed by the victim.

Castro had been linked to the murder last year of the suspects' youngest brother.

Investigators, however, said that although the victim was identified as the killer, no charges had been filed against him.

The victim had just come from an outing and was walking near a barangay hall at Bonanza when the suspects showed up.

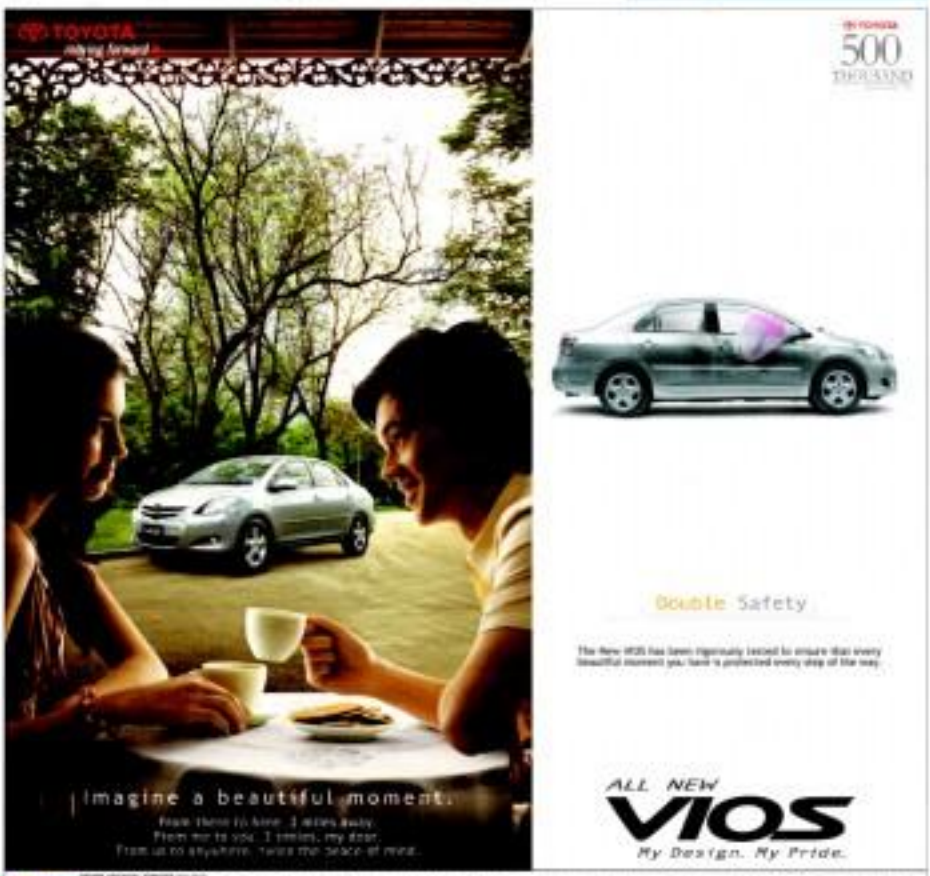
Jervin Sebastian and John Emmanuel Balucanas, who were with the victim, said the suspects, armed with handguns and a long bolo, blocked Castro's path and accosted him. Then, a shot rang out.

Castro died on the spot from a gunshot wound on his head, police said.

The witnesses were left unharmed by the suspects who fled on foot.

Police said they would look into the death of the suspect's brother.

They said they did not know why no charges were filed against Castro.



Skyway workers call for inquiry on 'onerous' deal

By Ria T. Olchondra

SKYWAY WORKERS ARE ASKING for a congressional inquiry of the Philippine National Construction Corp. (PNCC) and the suspension of its president and CEO Ma. Theresa Dofiana, niece of former cabinet secretary Mike Defensor.

Members of the PNCC Skyway Employees' Union, who "respect" to the PNCC headquarters in Mandaluyong City on Friday, said the transfer of operating rights from their company to Skyway O&M Corp. involved an onerous deal that would "give a foreign-owned company gain-inflicted windfall profits at the expense of the government's and the public's interests."

Union president Jose Apolito Ado claimed in a phone interview that Defensor recently signed on July 18, 2007 the amendment to the long-pioneered Toll-by Operation Agreement (ATOA) with the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) and a foreign-controlled investor, CITRA Metro Manila Tollways Corp.

Ado said the ATOA allowed Skyway O&M Corp., where CITRA had a stake, was empowered to raise toll rates yearly instead of once every two years. It would also be allowed to trim down the rate difference between fees on the elevated and at-grade (ground level) portions of the Skyway to encourage motorists to use the elevated portion.

Ado said this would result in at least a 150 percent toll rate increase for the ground level portion. He added that PNCC, PNCC Skyway and foreign-owned toll company CITRA signed a Memorandum of Agreement on Dec. 21 that paved the way for the turnover of Skyway operations to a CITRA subsidiary on the first day of the year.

"Skyway O&M Corporation (SOMCO) was 'instantly formed by CITRA on Dec. 21, just before the MOA was signed," Ado said. The IBSA indicates that SOMCO would pay PNCC P420 million for the handover.

"This is grossly unfair because PNCC was valued at P619 million as of the end of 2006," Ado added. "SOMCO's worth moved to so much in the 10 years maintenance of PNCC."

Metro Gaisano draws 6 lucky winners of Hyundai Tucson on Feb. 2

Metro Gaisano stores around the country will hold the final draw of the "Wish Upon a Car" Christmas Raffle Promo where six (6) lucky shoppers will emerge owners of a brand new Hyundai Tucson. Each Metro store - Metro Colon, Super Metro Mandaue, Metro Ayala, Metro Legazpi, Metro Luzana and Metro Market! Market! in Fort Bonifacio in Taguig - will soon will surely make the young and young at heart giggle as he visits Metro Iucena at 4PM; pop sensation, Jenny Bondoc, will serenade shoppers with his own hits in Metro Market! Market! At 4PM.

This event is made possible by Hyundai, Globe Telecoms, JVC, Panasonic, Vitron, Blue Comp, Parklane International Hotel, Cafe Orchidia, Mario D' Boro Shoes and Sandugo.

Anatomy of graft

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

I HAVE WITH ME DOCUMENTS TRACing step by step how a big automotive firm was able to cheat the government in terms of fraudulent tax payments.

In 2001, the motor company allegedly bought fifty (50) unit completely knocked-down (CKD) vans costing P46.8 million from certain bus companies to be used to ply its duties and trains to the Bay area of Cavitex.

A year later, the automotive firm found out it was entitled to an overpayment refund from the customs bureau amounting to P38.5 million.

It hired a broker to work on the refund, with a provision of a 10 percent commission if he succeeded.

On June 7, 2002, then customs commissioner Titus Villanueva ordered the bureau to file a case against the automotive firm to collect the P46.8 million the firm paid the revenue agency in the form of fake BOC.

But the case was dismissed on May 17, 2005. What I discover, upon scrutiny of the customs bureau records, is that the broker never submitted a single document.

The broker hired by the automotive firm asked then Finance Secretary Jesus Jurencio for the P38.5 million refund.

Jurencio denied the request, saying the firm must first pay the P46.8 million before it could avail itself of any refund from the government.

Then Justice Secretary Mercedes Gutierrez also denied the request for a refund by the big auto firm for the same reason.

When George Jereos replaced Villanueva as customs chief, the broker sent a letter to Damian Florido, chief legal officer of Jurencio, requesting a reconsideration. Florido also denied the request outright.

Undaunted, the broker took a different tack: another operative, a customs examiner, Jasmin Fernando, for the P38.9 million refund.

Bernardo also rejected the request.

The broker, being huge, was told that a pretty "face" at the customs bureau might do the job for him.

In a breakfast meeting with the broker, the face allegedly brought with her an aide of Finance Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane.

After the broker agreed to pay her 8% million in "commission," the pretty woman called up somebody at the customs legal office on her cellular phone.

The following day, the customs legal officer whom the fixer called over the phone endorsed the request.

Several days later, the application for the P38.9-million refund was approved and released.

Landfill could be first case for 'green' court

By Kristine L. Alave

AN ENVIRONMENT group said yesterday it would challenge before a "green" court the issuance of an environmental compliance permit (ECC) to a landfill controlled by the Rizal provincial government.

Bulacan Kalikasan president Jory Papa said it would question the permit given by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) "after the fact."

The Rodriguez landfill case could be one of the first test cases before an environmental court, organized recently by Supreme Court Chief Justice Reynato Puno to speed up the resolution of environment-related disputes.

Support

Papa said the management of the 75-hectare landfill, which was supposed to be the first provincial-run government project, violated proper procedures in applying for an ECC.

Since it opened in October, the garbage dump had been operating on a provisional permit issued by the Laguna Lake Development Authority.

He said the issuance of the ECC would not end the dispute between Governor Casimiro "Boy" Ynares III.

Cuevas maintains Ynares' claim was illegal as it had no power from the local government.

Ynares, meanwhile, warned that those who refused to follow the ECC and the provincial resolution would face charges.

AN EMERGENCY crane lies alongside the damaged wing of a British Airways plane which landed short of the runway at London's Heathrow Airport on Jan. 17. -

BA flight misses London Heathrow runway; 18 hurt

LONDON—A BRITISH AIRWAYS jet crash landed short of the runway at London Heathrow on Thursday injuring 18 people and causing delays and cancellations at the world's busiest international airport.

The misadventure of the Boeing 777 was smashed with the tail end and the engines touching the ground. Passengers praised out of emergency slides while firefighters sprayed safety foam around the jet. One passenger said he he had seen the "history" by escaping unharmed.

Television pictures showed dishtowels carving up the grass ahead of the runway used by Flight BA38 from Beijing with 136 passengers and 16 crew on board. All the injuries were reported as minor.

The Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB) said an initial report on the crash would be available within 46 hours, but Chief Inspector of Air Accidents David King warned that it could take more than a month for the full report to be produced.

All those on board the plane will be questioned by the AAIB, and the airline's "black box" and cockpit voice recorders will also be checked.

Paul Hester, a passenger on the flight, said the plane hit parking just as it was about to land.

"I could hear the undercarriage crunch and smell the most fantastic the plane just dropped," he said.

"The wheels came out and went for touchdown, and the next moment we just dropped. I couldn't tell you how far.

"When everything came to a standstill, I looked out of the window and the undercarriage was gone and the plane was on its belly."

AFP

Clinton leads Obama in Nevada

WASHINGTON—HILLARY CLINTON holds a narrow five-point lead on rival Barack Obama in Nevada on the eve of the state's presidential nominating contest, according to a Reuters/C-SPAN/Zogby poll released on Friday.

Clinton, a New York senator and former first lady, led Obama, an Illinois senator, by 42 percent to 37 percent in the rolling tracking poll. Former North Carolina Sen. John Edwards was a distant third with 22 percent.

In South Carolina, where Republicans vote on Saturday, Arizona Sen. John McCain maintained a steady seven-point edge on former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, 29 percent to 22 percent, although rival and Mitt Romney gained three points overnight to climb into third place at 15 percent.

Both polls had a margin of error of 3.4 percentage points.

Nevada and South Carolina are the next battlegrounds in the race to choose candidates for November's election to succeed President George W. Bush, with the winners in each state hoping to pick up some momentum as the calendar accelerates to Feb. 5 contests in 22 states.

So far, no candidate in either party has been able to build up any real steam in a chaotic race that has seen five winners in the first five major state contests.

Obama and Clinton split the first two Democratic battles and have been running close in polls in Nevada, where turnout is concentrated in the state's urban areas. Turnout in caucuses in 2004 drew just 9,000 participants, and no one is sure how many will turn out this time.

"This is a very competitive race, but it will depend on organization," pollster John Zogby said. "This is a caucus without much history to it. It's a caucus to see who can do the best job of turning out their vote."

The poll showed Clinton, who would be the first woman US president, led Obama among women, whites, Hispanics, conservatives, older voters and among voters in union households. Obama, who would be the first black US president, led easily among blacks and younger voters.

The two Democrats have clashed in the past week over a plan to allow voting to casino hotels on the Las Vegas Strip, approved by a federal judge on Thursday and over Clinton's comments on race that were seen by some as a slight on civil rights leader Martin Luther King.

Republicans also hold a contest in Nevada on Saturday in a race that has drawn less attention from the media and candidates. The Republican race in Nevada was not polled by Zogby.

The Republican presidential contenders have focused on South Carolina, the first primary in the South. McCain, an Arizona senator who won New Hampshire, hopes to extend from his loss in Michigan on Tuesday.

McCain finished second there to Romney, a former Massachusetts governor who promised to revive the state's ailing manufacturing base. Romney's overnight rise was the first sign of a bounce from the Michigan win, Zogby said.

"There is some momentum afoot," he said. In the more recent day of polling, Romney had notched 19 percent, he said.

Huckabee, a Baptist minister who says lives and is hoping to make inroads with the state's big bloc of evangelical voters, still led among "born-again" voters and those who say they are "very" conservative.

But McCain held a clear edge among independents, Republicans, Democrats, liberals, moderates and older voters.

Former Tennessee Sen. Fred Thompson was fourth with 11 percent, Texas Rep. Ron Paul was at four percent and former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, still reeling from his first foray into the race on Jan. 29 in Florida, was at ten percent.

About nine percent of Republican voters were unsure who they would support, with about five percent of Democratic uncertain.

Reuters

CIA tags al-Qaida for Bhutto attack

WASHINGTON—THE CIA, JUDGE AL-Qaida and allies of a Pakistani tribal leader for the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, CIA Director Michael Hayden said in a Washington Post interview published on Friday.

Hayden's comments were the most definitive public assessment by a US intelligence official of who was responsible for the assassination of the former Pakistani prime minister and opposition leader on Dec. 27, the Post said, adding that the CIA assessment mirrors that of Pakistan.

Hayden said Bhutto was killed by fighters allied with Baitullah Mehsud, a tribal leader in northwestern Pakistan, with support from al-Qaida's operative network, Dow reported.

The Dow said Hayden described the killing as "part of an organized campaign" that has included suicide bombings and other attacks on Pakistani leaders. Reuters

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Gilbert Lawrence B. Bueza

Britain assails 'reprehensible' Russia

LONDON—LONDON ACCUSED MOSCOW OF "reprehensible" conduct Thursday after the British Council suspended the operation of Russian offices following a secret police crackdown on the cultural body.

Foreign Secretary David Miliband said Moscow was displaying Cold War-style tactics and branded its actions a "stain on Russia's reputation and standing" as he voiced London's "anger and dismay."

The British Council—which promotes cultural and education-al links—earlier said the Russian authorities had made it impossible for it to operate in two of its three offices in the country.

The diplomatic spat between the two powers, triggered by the November 2006 radiation poisoning murder in London of Kremlin critic Alexander Litvinenko, showed no sign of easing.

"The Russian authorities have made it impossible for us to operate in Saint Petersburg and Yekaterinburg so I have taken the decision to suspend operations in both cities," British Council chief executive Martin Davidson said in London.

"Our paramount consideration is the well being of our staff and I feel we cannot continue our work without significant risk to them."

Russia ordered the British Council to close the two offices from Jan. 1, alleging its irregularities following the tit-for-tat expulsion of diplomats last July.

The row started by London after Moscow refused to extradite Andrei Lugovoi, the man British prosecutors want in charge with Litvinenko's murder.

Miliband described Russian pressure as "reprehensible, not worthy of a great country" and refused to retaliate against Russian cultural bodies in Britain, saying there was "nothing to lose" from such links.

"Russia has failed to show any legal reasons under Russian or international law why the British Council should not continue to operate," he told parliament.

Miliband said Moscow had "failed to substantiate" claims that the British Council is avoiding paying tax, insisting they were fully compliant.

"We saw similar actions during the Cold War, but frankly thought that they had been put behind us," he said.

"The longer-term cost is there (Russia's) standing in the world as a responsible international player."

London received the backing of the European Union and the United States.

In a strongly worded statement, the Slovenian EU presidency said "the EU deeply regrets in particular the harassment of British Council staff, as well as the administrative and other measures announced by the Russian authorities." AFP

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College students have evolved to be one of the most dynamic people in today's Filipino society. Today's soon to be professionals don't settle for anything ordinary. You can find this self-motivated character in Mich Arsulis.

Mich is a 20 year old fashion student at the De La Salle - College of St. Benilde. Mich is everything but typical. It can be hard to imagine how this petite beauty juggles time between school, family and her business.

In the urban way of living, proximity is always the key word. "Because I live in Alabang, a lot of time is taken out from my day just going to and from school", Mich says. "But, having a comfortable and convenient place to stay in Taft Avenue would take such a big load off my back."

This early on, Mich has made the first steps into her career in fashion. She has put her creative and business bobs into her own fashion line which she labelled Mich Arsulis. "My life is really hectic now because after a busy week full of exams, I still have to call suppliers or go 'buy tela', she says. "And, with the bulk of notarizing academers, having a unit near school would be such a big deal of comfort for me. It would be my own space where I can do everything I have to do without worrying about traffic."

Mich is not all work and no play. This hardworking young woman has the need to party. "Living in Taft would not only make it easy to go to class, but I would just be 10 minutes away from Makati and The Fort where you can usually find me with my friends".

Mich is just another excited unit owner of the WH Taft Residences which is located right beside the De La Salle University in Taft Avenue. Just like Mich, WH Taft Residences embodies the perfect balance between art and "functionality" which serves each unit owner's dreams and needs to a tee.

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WHAT'S INSIDE
- Nadal, Henin, Williams lead advance of seeds /A22

SPORTS

Editor Teddyboy B. Molmisa Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

CHIMMAS Ikeda breaks the news of her amazing victory to her mom in Davao during yesterday's awards rites.

Ikeda wins RP Ladies as ailing Jaya falters

By Marvey B. Castillo

CARMONA, CAVITE—IT OWNERS' mouth the gumption of finish rounds, but a passion more than enough for young Chibiao Ikeda.

The Filipino-Japanese tyro struggled to come over par 73 yesterday, but still went on to claim the 40th Philippine Ladies' Amateur championship by one over Filipina-Australian Cielo Jessa Jaya Jr. of Indonesia at the Manila Southwoods here.

Ikeda, the chubby and long-hitting 16-year-old, rallied from three down at the start of the day, finally forging ahead with five holes to play to win the first major title of her young career after entering to spare.

Ikeda's highest score in the 54-hole championship left her with a 214 to edge the Legaspi lassie.

But it was definitely a whole lot better than the closing 79 the two-day leader Jaya turned in for a 217 aggregate as the Indonesian ace lost her game due to severe emotional pain that rendered both her legs.

Filipino-Iranian Christine Gorjon, who entered in the final 18 tied for the second spot together with Jaya at the start of the day, finally bagged solo third

Bad day for bookmakers

Nadal, Henin, Williams lead advance of seeds

MELBOURNE—THERE WAS NO STOPPING THE SEEDS AT MELBOURNE Park on Friday as they obediently refused to budge, crushing the opposition at the Australian Open.

Giant killers have been in short supply at the year's first grand slam and so it continued on day five with champion Serena Williams and top seed Justine Henin dicing their way through to the fourth round.

They were joined by fifth seed Maria Sharapova, No. 9 Jelena Jankovic, ninth seed Rafael Nadal and No. 4 Nikolay Davydenko on a bad day for the bookmakers.

Henin advanced by beating feisty Italian Francesca Schiavone, 7-5, 6-4.

"Francesca is always a tough player, tough opponent, and I knew that," the top seed said. "I knew it was going to be a good fight."

Henin, who has now won 21 consecutive matches since losing in last year's Wimbledon semifinals to Marion Bartoli, eases Hsieh Su-wei for a place in the quarters after the Taiwanese player ousted France's Amelie Mau.

Williams eased through with a routine 6-3, 6-4 win over Victoria Azarenka of Belarus.

Next up for her is 12th-seeded Czech Nicole Vaidisova who ousted Japan's Ai Sugiyama.

Jankovic dragged off fatigue and nagging injuries to beat Virginie Razzano, 6-2, 4-6, 6-1.

"The 22 year-old said her fitness was "not all that great" and she briefly lost focus against Razzano, but still struggled to put her finger on the cause of her lackluster form at the season-opening Grand Slam.

"I have no idea what it is," she said. "I should have finished it in two sets but completely lost my concentration at the end of the second and got very tired."

She will face the winner of the night match between Saisai Shuai-zeng and Australia's Casey Dellacqua.

Sharapova sweated while look-alike opponent Elena Vesnina, 6-3, 6-4.

"I thought I made a really good job of stepping up and doing a good job," Sharapova smiled.

"I think the game out with not much to say, and hitting the balls big but when it got close that's where I felt I had the advantage. Whether that is experience or her getting right I don't know. But I am pleased."

Elena Dementieva will hope to make more of a show in Thursday's semi. The Russian 11th seed pummelled 17th seeded Israeli Shahar Peer, 6-2, 6-0.

Davydenko dipped through to the fourth round and crushed in his relative accessibility—he is yet to play on the main showcourt despite his high ranking.

"I don't think about center court for me now," the Russian said reporters after beating Marc Gicquel of France, 6-3, 6-2, 6-3.

Nadal dropped off a shoe duel to beat Frenchman Gilles Simon, 7-5, 6-2, 6-2.

The Spaniard trailed 5-4 in the first set to an inspired Simon, who wasted six set points, but he dug deep to win it and then ran away with the match.

"He started very aggressively and I made some mistakes," Nadal said. "I had some very difficult moments, particularly serving at 5-4 down in the first set. My serve was very important today and I had to serve two aces in that game to hold [him on]."

On next plays Paul-Henri Mathieu of France or Stefan Koubek.

Reuters

A LACKLUSTER Serena Williams, who nearly kissed her chance goodbye before recovering to beat Virginia Razzano.

AFP

NAKED. Nadal, despite struggling early, hammers out a straight sets victory.

AFP

Underdog Gorres displays fine form

ALA BOY 2 "THE SHARP" GORRES, PICKED early as an underdog against Australia's Nic Darchinyan in their feb. 2 IBF eliminator, displayed unusual sharpness during a public workout at the ALA Gym in Bonifacio on Thursday.

Gorres sparred three rounds each against lightweight Glen Montenegro and featherweight Gil Milligen and wowed the crowd at the jampacked ALA Gym as he repeatedly rapped the slower Montenegro with straight lefts and shady counters.

He now displayed his fabulous defensive prowess against the rampaging Milligen.

"We're 90 percent ready," declared Gorres' trainer Nilo Villanueva after revealed that Gorres had already logged a hundred rounds in sparring and will do 18 more rounds while capering all in the next two weeks.

"He's ready to take on Darchinyan," ALA Gym boss Antonio L. Aldeguer said. "I have never seen Gorres so shady and so confident."

The winner of the Gorres-Darchinyan fight will automatically challenge IBF flyweight champion Daniel Bisbal of Russia for the world title.

Meanwhile, Aldeguer informed that tickets for the highly-anticipated match were selling briskly. Already, fans are just a few choice seats left unsold for the fight at the 3,000-capacity Waterfront Hotel Grand Ballroom.

"I just has to stick to his game plan," said Nonito Donaire, the only fighter to have beaten Darchinyan so far.

"It's has to move and move since he's a lot quicker than Darchinyan, who really has a power punch," added the reigning IBF 112-pound king.

"He needs to jab a lot and try to out-box Darchinyan," Donaire added. Sabarit, Legazpinka and Rong Arcanys, Contributors

NFL: Green Bay Packers fans are a superstitious lot

MILWAUKEE—IF THE GREEN Bay Packers were an organization themselves a mile this weekend, all this have to do is make sure John Van Alstyne knows to toss his flag before kickoff.

The 63-year-old production engineer from Oakland flag in his front yard all week for video. It doesn't just bother the state of each Packers game. Three times during this NFL season he forgot to lower it and whose same three weeks the Packers suffered their only losses.

"It's all my fault," joked Van Alstyne. "I'm attributing their losses to me."

Maybe it's not just him. Plenty of Packs fans are convinced—with varying degrees of resolve—that their clothes, their lucky coins their teddy bears determine whether the Packers win or lose.

Green Bay hosts the New York Giants on Sunday in the NFC title game. The winners advances to the Super Bowl XLII to face either the undefeated New England Patriots or the San Diego Chargers.

Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle will be doing his part to generate good karma for the home team. According to spokesman Matt Canter, Doyle plans to wear the same lucky Packers sweat shirt and hat he wore last Saturday when Green Bay beat the Seattle Seahawks 42-20.

"We have the green and gold. This is just a fantastic team with the best quarterback ever," Canter said. "He'll be cheering them on with a small degree of superstition."

Joe Sampson will be cheering them on with a slightly greater degree of superstition. Sampson is one his team owns some of his success to his weekly rituals.

They start the night before the game. The 26-year-old real estate agent sleeps in his Packers pajamas, then wakes up on game day to suffer in his Packers sleep.

Then he wanders the game as a friendly bartender, always on the same barstool.

What's weird, he says, is that he isn't superstitious in any other aspect of his life. "I'm usually a pretty level-headed person—God's why saying these things are loud sounds kind of silly. I'm not here, my avatar just a kid."

The fans said their rituals are mainly for fun, that they doesn't mean they'll mess up this week end, especially with the stakes so high. That's why Van Alstyne's Packers flag is coming down.

"It's hanging out now, but it will be removed on Sunday," he vowed.

AP

GREEN Bay fans believe that quarterback Brett Favre and the rest of the Packers will benefit from a healthy dose of superstition when they face the New York Giants.

AFP/FILE

Abejo tops DMG golf; Prieto aces

TIM ABEJO EMERGED OVERALL CHAMpion of the eighth Domingo M. Guevara Jr. Memorial Golf Tournament held at the Mich Wich Golf and Country Club in Muntinlupa City recently.

Abejo, striking up with a handicap of 14 under the Modified Callaway system, won with a net 71 from a gross of 85.

Three-time overall winner Marcelino Cleto prevailed in Group 1, tied Estrella topped Group II and Tito Sacramento ruled Group III. Vicky Sarreles dominated the ladies division.

James Ochoa and Hubert Lim finished second and third, respectively, behind Cleto while Carlos Bulseco and Glen Mongaya headed second and third in Group II.

Golfer Tomasgan grabbed second place over Erling Piedra in Group III while Ching Libores and Abbey Lopid wound up second and third in the ladies bracket.

Alex Prieto won the P50,000 cash prize donated by General Insurance Brokers and a Turbohawk iron set from UCPB Gen. Insurance for scoring an ace at the par-3 17th hole of Lido.

Bill Ho one-stone close to winning the Chrysler 300M and Toyota Vios staked for aces on the third and eighth holes.

Tournament director Benjamin Guevara said that the annual event drew a banner roster of 256 participants.

Major sponsors were Cebu Motors, Toyota, Koray Pilipinas, GEAC, Radiowealth Finance, MK Transport, Honeycomb Builders, Asian High Technology Grocers Insurance Brokers, GBA Travel and Tours, Bestway Transportation, Citi Hardware and Wee Magic.

NBA STANDINGS

Eastern Conference	W	L	PCT	GB
Atlantic Division				
Boston	32	8	.800	–
Toronto	28	12	.700	4.0
Orlando	28	13	.683	4.5
New Jersey	21	20	.512	11.5
Philadelphia	17	24	.415	15.5
New York	11	28	.282	19.5
Central Division				
Detroit	31	10	.756	–
Cleveland	27	14	.659	4.0
Chicago	24	16	.600	6.5
Indiana	19	21	.475	12.0
Milwaukee	14	25	.359	16.5
Atlanta	13	27	.325	18.0
Southeast Division				
Miami	24	17	.585	–
Washington	19	21	.475	4.5
Charlotte	18	22	.450	5.5
Atlanta	13	27	.325	10.5
Western Conference	W	L	PCT	GB
Southwest Division				
San Antonio	31	9	.775	–
New Orleans	27	13	.675	4.0
Houston	26	14	.650	5.0
Dallas	25	15	.625	6.0
Memphis	10	30	.250	21.0
Northwest Division				
Utah	28	13	.683	–
Denver	27	14	.659	1.0
Portland	26	15	.634	2.0
Minnesota	16	25	.390	12.0
Seattle	14	28	.333	14.5
Pacific Division				
L.A. Lakers	29	11	.725	–
Phoenix	26	14	.650	3.0
Golden State	23	16	.590	5.5
L.A. Clippers	16	24	.400	13.0
Sacramento	15	25	.375	14.0

NBA TODAY on TV

ESPN 8:30 p.m. – Philadelphia 76ers vs Boston Celtics (replay on 11:30 p.m.)

Basketball TV 7:30 p.m. – Minnesota Timberwolves at Phoenix Suns (replay at 4:30 a.m.)

ABS-CBN 11:30 p.m. – Golden State Warriors at Chicago Bulls

Cavs nip Spurs; Suns torch Lakers

SAN ANTONIO—LEBRON JAMES scored 37 points and the Cleveland Cavaliers got a measure of revenge with a 90-88 road victory over the defending champion San Antonio Spurs on Thursday night, their meeting since last year's NBA Finals.

"We have been playing great basketball the last month and a half," James told reporters after the Cavaliers' third straight win.

"Everybody understands what we need to do to get wins and that's on the defensive end—and we did it here."

Ephraim Ilgauskas added 17 points and Anderson Varejao had 12 points and 14 rebounds for the Cavaliers.

Manu Ginobili had 31 points for the Spurs, who swept the Cavaliers in four games for the NBA title last season, but missed a jumper from the free throw line in the closing second that would have forced overtime.

Tony Parker contributed 23 points but he too misfired, missing two free throws with 29 seconds to play that would have tied the score.

Tim Duncan added 12 points, 11 rebounds and four blocked shots.

In Los Angeles, Phoenix leapfrogged the Lakers to take back the Pacific Division lead after the Hornets in a 106-98 road victory.

Leandro Barbosa scored 22 points to lead the Suns, who went for the eighth time in 11 games to enter a half game ahead of the Lakers.

The Lakers had their seven-game winning streak snapped.

Los Angeles lost for just the fourth time in their past 21 games.

LEBRON James (left) of the Cleveland Cavaliers challenges Tim Duncan of the San Antonio Spurs in a close shave of marquee names.

AFP

At Denver, Linas Kleiza scored a career high 41 points to lead the Nuggets past the Utah Jazz, 120-109.

Allen Iverson added 18 for the Nuggets, who rebounded from successive losses. Carmelo Anthony chipped in 13, and Marcus Camby had 24 rebounds and 11 blocks for Denver.

The Jazz saw their five game winning streak come to an end. Reuters, AP

Ditoy Luzon, dinhi sa Visayas, aqui en Mindanao at sa buong Pilipinas, The Philippine Daily Inquirer is the No.1 broadsheet.

Nielsen Media Index Wave 2 2007 Figures. Among broadsheet readers yesterday.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Dare to ask. Be an Inquirer.

SPORTS

Davis Cup: RP out to sustain surge vs Japan

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINES, LOOKING TO TIE: Davis Cup coach three years ago, tries to reclaim its desire to crash the World Group by renewing its old rivalry with Japan in the Asia-Oceania Group 1 tie, 8:00 a.m. at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

And a lot of things are going for the Filipinos, according to chief organizer Randy Villanueva of the Philippine Lawn Tennis Association. One of them is the last time the country—honored by Filipinos Cecil Mamiit and Eric Taino—has won in last eight ties.

"The last time Asian became the big-wigs 27 years ago, when we played Sweden in the World Group playoffs here," said Villanueva, Philta's SF for tennis development.

The home squad, which will be known as the Orbusen Distiller SF Davis Cup Team, aside to handle Japan and the winner of the Uzbekistan-India tie here to reach the World Group.

Johnny Arcilla and Treat Huey, John Tiono complete the SF squad that will have sports patron Jose Mrad Lhuillier as team manager.

Japan will be honored by 30-year-old Satoshi Iwabuchi, who is ranked 309th in the world; Takao Suzuki, 31; Go Soeda, 25, and Yasuhi Inoue, 30. The Japanese are coming off a 5-2 loss to Romania last year.

"We hope Filipinos will support our team in those three days because this is going to be an exciting and emotion-charged tie," said Villanueva, himself a former national campaigner.

The Philippines, which holds Japan, 11-9 in their one-on-one duel in the Davis Cup, last won in 1995, when a team spearheaded by Joseph Lipardo and Robert Angeles overcame the Team Shimadzu-led Japan side, 3-2, at the Philippine Columbian Association courts.

But the country went into a tailspin after taking a 5-0 trot from Japan the next year in Tokyo in GI, eventually leading to Group 3 in 2006 after getting beaten by Lebanon.

In 1991, Felix Barrientos led the SF team to the World Group playoffs only to absorb a 5-0 whitewashing from Sweden. Now honored by Nicklas Kulti and Christian Bergstrom.

PHILIPPINE VANGUARD: Cecil Mamiit

Singapore, Malaysia aces in DHL Am golf

GRACE PLAYERS FROM SINGAPORE and Malaysia will parade as international favor in the DHL-WWF Filipinos National Amateur golf championship slated Jan. 29-Feb. 3 at Guadalupe Golf's North course in Laguna.

Veteran internationalist Quincy Quek and Jeremy Ng will spearhead Singapore's bid in the four-day championship, which is expected to draw the country's top players, who are guiding for the Philippine Amateur Interclub championship next month.

Malaysia will have amateur Chin-wind Goh, Stephanie Loi, Nicole Koh and Koh Suck Wuen will represent Singapore in the women's side of the competition now on its 15th year and jointly sponsored by DHL and WWF-Philippines.

Mohammad Ahmad Nasir and Nicholas Fung Chin Yung will become Malaysia in the men's side with Amad Johann Bohor and Amanda Chin playing in the 54-hole ladies tournament.

To open up the action, Singapore, Malaysia and the host country will also compete in a 54-hole team event where the top two scores of the three players count.

Leading the local challenge are Yeoman Aurora, Gene Gonzalez and Gino Gonzalez of the ICTSI team and Arnel Mendez and Mark Fortunado of Calatagan.

Also expected to see action are the members of the Guadalupe team that will be defending its INL Interclub championship next month in Bacolod.

Aaron Tingkanco, silver medalist in the last SEA Games and runner-up to Dottie Ardina last year, is tipped to lead the ladies cast along with Cyna Rodriguez, Regina De Guzman and Cristeta Bacla.

The organizing National Golf Association of the Philippines (NGAP)—and Guadalupe in behalf of rookies is on Jan. 25.

For inquiries, call the NGAP at 5256987 or 5247260.

Manong R. Gaddi

SPORTS HEROES OF YESTERYEAR: Philippine Sports Commission chair Willie "Butch" Ramirez (center), commissioner Jose "J. Mondo (left) and Arturo Marapagal, president of the Philippine Olympic Committee, show an old picture of Filipino Olympians on display at the PSC Sports Exhibitorium. The three officials helped plan the exhibition for the inauguration of the Philippine Sports Museum at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex in Manila. The Sports Museum, due to open on April, will feature an array of artifacts and memorabilia of outstanding Filipino athletes, coaches and trainers.

SPORTSWATCH

Accel 3-point shootout today

EIGHT THREE-BALL SET FOR THE ACCEL 3-Point Shootout Challenge today at the UP College of Human Kinetics Gym in Diliman.

Nine rocks the Game, Sharpshot, sponsored by Hapee Toothpaste and Mothers Choice, is open to all college students 18 to 30 years old. PBA players Mike Cortez and Jeff Chan will be point shooting there for the participants.

Also in the fun of Fong Lee topped last year's contest, beating Beau Simon of Ateneo.

Xavier cage clinic gets going

THE XAVIER BASKETBALL ACADEMY CLINIC will hold clinics starting this week for boys and girls five years and older at the K. Bichel Center, Xavier Estate in Xavier Subdivision, Novaliches.

The NBA-stress athletics accept non-Xavier participants.

Head coach Monte Villegas said the clinics Saturday, sessions are from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., each for 15 girls to enroll, while Wednesday sessions are from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. For inquiries, call Rose B. 7296800 or 7273229.

SJC derby stakes big prizes

THE TOTAL GUARANTEED PRIZES FOR THE coming 2008 SJC International Derby at San Juan Coliseum may reach P7 million due to the huge number of entries. SJC as of yesterday.

The SJC management has allotted two days of elimination rounds on Monday and Wednesday. The semifinals and finals are set on Jan. 23 and 27, respectively.

Entries must be submitted tomorrow. For inquiries, call 7230000 or 7230003.

50 entries in Las Piñas 4-cocker

FIFTY ENTRIES MAKE UP THE FIELD IN THE Sabong by a Cause 4-Cock Derby slated Jan. 31 at the Las Piñas Coliseum.

Mayor Vera Aguilar and his daughter Bobbi Ismail the lead raising effort to support the City's Cibo-based immunization technology feeding program. The minimum will get P800,000 for an entry fee of P15,000.

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NASA IKAW ANG SWERTE NG!
SWERTRAVEL

WB unit to quadruple loans to RP

INQUIRER MONITOR
Figures that matter in our nation's life

Vehicle sales up
(Total vehicle sales, Jan-Nov 2006 and 2007)

IFC sees lending rising to $500M this fiscal year

THE WORLD BANK'S PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT ARM, IMpressed by the Philippines' strong economic growth and relative political calm, expects to quadruple its loans to the country this fiscal year, the agency said yesterday.

Jesse Ang, the acting country manager for International Finance Corp., said lending to Philippine projects will likely rise to $500 million from $126 million in its 2007 fiscal year.

"The opportunity for us to lend depends on the economic environment and to a certain extent the political environment," Ang told reporters.

"Right now we are in a very good situation, the Philippines, and a lot of investors are coming in, so the projects are happening, particularly as you can see on the power side."

Ang said the loans would be used for infrastructure and energy projects.

Although a possible US recession and rising oil prices are expected to slow down Philippine economic growth this year, the country is still expected to expand 6.1 percent in 2008, according to a Bloomberg poll.

Healthy consumer demand and a quieter political scene have been attracting foreign investors, and IFC loans and investments have been steadily increasing over the last five years, from $67 million in fiscal year 2003-2004.

IFC is also planning to sell P5 billion worth of peso-denominated bonds and use

WB UNIT: B2

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■ **DBP to acquire gov't** stake in Al-Amanah /B6

BSP eases realty lending rules

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE MANGO SENTRAL MC PEOPLE has approved the liberalization of real estate lending regulations for the first time since the 1997 Asian crisis to pump more money into one of the government's priority sectors—infrastructure and housing.

In an interview after the meeting of the policy-making Monetary Board Thursday night, BSP Deputy Governor Nestor Espenilla Jr. said the banking regulator had agreed to adopt a single industry limit of 20 percent on the banking system's real estate loans as a share of total loans.

The 20-percent cap was slapped on the sector's exposure to the volatile property sector by the BSP shortly before the Asian currency crisis crippled what's left loans started to feed speculative property play. But a hooray to increase the exposures to 30 percent was then incorporated in accommodative loans not exceeding P3.5 million for the purchase or improvement of residential units.

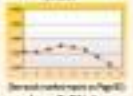
"There's now only one ratio (the 20 percent) which is 20 percent but the board also redefined real estate loans to carve out certain items such as those lent for infrastructure," Espenilla said.

BSP: B2

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
P 40.07 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Jan. 18, 2008

STOCK MARKET
PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares close 2.5% lower

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 2.5 PERCENT lower yesterday on mounting worries about the health of the United States economy and other sharp falls in Wall Street and around the region, dealers said.

The composite index ended down 80.18 points to 3,188.20, off a low of 3,111.08.

It was the index's weakest close since Aug. 21, when it settled at 3,157.92.

The broader all-share index fell 61.97 points to 1,991.38.

(RAMOS) B2

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CROSSWINDS TAGAYTAY

Wellex Industries eyes shift to mining, oil drilling

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacuna

WELLEX INDUSTRIES INC. OF plastics king William Gaerlan is drilling in business focus to high-growth sectors such as mining and petroleum explorations from manufacturing and manufacturing, a member of Gaerlan's family said yesterday.

Following the listing anniversary of Wellex yesterday, company vice president Nestle Gaerlan said Wellex Industries Group was currently looking into "securing its its roots" as a petroleum explorer and possibly an upscale mining operator.

Gaerlan said the company has filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission an application to change its primary purpose.

Wellex Industries was originally incorporated on Oct. 16, 1956, as Republic Resources and Development Corp. (Rudeco) to primarily engage in the business of mining and oil explorations.

Beset by difficulties experienced by the oil and mining industries during the 1980s, the company's pursuit of activities to revive itself led to the entry of The Wellex Group Inc. (TWGI) in 1994.

The company was subsequently transformed into a holding company with manufacturing interests, and changed its name to Wellex Industries Inc. on Sept. 10, 1997.

Gaerlan said the company was looking at the Georgia region in Mindanao, particularly Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur and Compostela Islands as well as Palawan for mining prospects. Mineral targets will include nickel, chromite, gold and copper.

For its planned resource base oil exploration, the company is looking at offshore Mindoro and Palawan.

Wellex chair Eduardo Mondragon estimated that initial exploration costs for a mining venture would be between P18 million and P35 million.

An offshore exploration well could cost between $28 million and $56 million, depending on the size of the project. Wellex is considering tying up with possible technical and financial partners for petroleum exploration.

Gaerlan also said that Wellex would still maintain its manufacturing facilities despite its diversification.

In documents filed with the Philippine Stock Exchange, Wellex said its two subsidiaries—Plastic City Industrial Corp. (PCIC) and Philmetals Asia Inc.—have temporarily ceased their manufacturing and commercial operations due to continued losses. Wellex's present activity is focused on leasing out its warehouse facilities, reorganizing its operations and maintaining its equipment and facilities.

One of the companies leasing Wellex's 38,000-square warehouse premises in Valenzuela is San Miguel Corp. As of Sept. 30, there were 24 companies leasing inside Plastic City.

Canadian firm pursues RP mine project

CANADIAN MINOR Bonanza Gold Corp. announced that it had completed mining $150,000 labour PE mulling) to pursue a prefeasibility study of the Mabenlai gold deposit in Camarines Norte.

The Alberta-based firm, which trades on the TSX Venture exchange, said in a statement it would use the proceeds to complete a scoping study and exploration on the Nakabuan Hill gold deposit and several other occurrences in the area as well as other projects in the United States and Canada.

Bonanza Gold is an emerging firm involved in the exploration of copper-gold porphyry and epithermal-type gold projects in Nevada, and has recently acquired an option to buy 80 percent of the Bulusukan Hill gold and porphyry-copper project.

Current estimates show that the Nakabuan property may yield about 7.4 million tons of ore with 1.31 grams of gold a ton.

The mine is part of Lobo town in Camarines Norte and comprises 14 contiguous mineral claims with an area of 3,000 acres. Reuters/ MC Dumlao

A TRADER scrutinizes area as he monitors the reading on the Philippine Stock Exchange in Makati. Philippine shares extended their losing streak to five sessions on Friday, with sentiment hit by fears of a recession in the world's largest economy. The main index closed 2.43 percent weaker on Friday.

Atlas Mining, TVI Resources in talks on new venture

By Bernard W. Dumalaga

THE PARENT FIRMS OF TVI RESOURCE AND Development (Philippines) Ltd. announced that the Zamboanga del Norte-based miner had agreed in initial talks with Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. on the establishment of a possible joint venture to develop a P150-million project.

Canadian firm TVI Pacific said in a statement that the move followed the signing of a memorandum of agreement between TVIRL and Atlas Mining, under which the former advanced P42 million.

In turn, Atlas Mining was given an option to enter into a joint venture with TVIRL to develop the Canatuan copper and zinc project. The option expires at the end of this month.

TVI Pacific said that aside from the talks with Atlas Mining, TVIRL was also in discussions with other parties to secure the funding required to develop the Canatuan sulphide project and to reduce its working capital deficiency.

"There can be no assurance that the joint venture (considered under the MOA with [Atlas Mining]) would be successfully concluded or that the (TVIRL) would be able to secure third-party financing to develop the Canatuan sulphide project," the company said.

TVIRL's Canatuan mine is producing gold and silver doré—ingots of an impure alloy silver—and would expand into production of copper and zinc concentrate. Following the planned construction of a sulphide plant.

Copper and zinc are contained in a sulphide deposit underlying the current open pit gold and silver production operations.

TVIRL said its target was to have the sulphide plant operating by the second half of 2008, assuming that project financing was available in early 2008.

TVIRL has financed the initial development and construction of the sulphide project from cash flow generated from current operations.

Latest company estimates showed that an additional $14.4 million in capital cost and working capital was needed for the sulphide project.

TVIRL clarified that this estimate reflected potential cost savings, which can be gained if portions of the existing production plants would be recovered in the proposed sulphide processing plant.

BSP eases ...

Turn to page B4

Liberalize excluded from the computation of real estate loans exposure was residential banking or those for the housing sector.

"Historically there's little risk from lending to housing as the past-due ratio from to every low as 0.3 percent (of total loans)," Espenilla said.

"Our purpose is really to promote lending to real estate to real estate (developers)," he said.

Analysts said the BSP is more concerned if banks would divert all their funds to speculative commercial property development.

Subsidized and low-cost housing, housing loans guaranteed by the state-owned Housing Guaranty Corp. and funded by the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council), would likewise be exempted from the ceiling, Espenilla said.

Based on the government's definition, low-cost housing refers to the financing of residential units worth below P2 million while subsidized housing refers to those worth P500,000 and below.

BOC urges Congress to amend Customs Code

Revision of Code seen to facilitate RP access to Kyoto Convention

By Michelle V. Rosca

THE BUREAU OF CUSTOMS (BOC) wants Congress to pass a bill that will amend outdated provisions of the Tariff and Customs Code of 1978.

According to Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales, it is updated law governing trade facilitation is necessary to enable the Philippines to become the first Asean country to fully comply with the Revised Kyoto Convention.

The convention provides best international practices as well as harmonized rules and regulations on trade facilitation for member countries to observe.

"We [BOC] want the Philippines to be the first country in Southeast Asia to accede to the Kyoto Convention," Morales told reporters. "It will achieve that, the Philippines will be a more attractive site for investments and trade, giving it an edge [over] its neighboring countries."

He said Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam also want to be part of the Kyoto Convention, aware of the investment benefits their membership can bring.

The first Kyoto Convention was implemented in 1974 with the aim of harmonizing trade facilitation rules. In 2006, signatory countries adopted the Revised Kyoto Convention, which focuses in the requirements of globalization and technological advancements that may help ease trade.

President Macapagal-Arroyo directed the bureau to work on the country's access to the Kyoto Convention, Morales said.

However, the Customs chief said, some provisions of the Tariff and Customs Code have to be amended, and the law needs to incorporate new provisions to allow recent technological advances to be used in facilitating trade.

For instance, the BOC wants import documents to be processed electronically. But Morales said the Tariff and Customs Code requires the manual processing of documents.

Morales also noted that under international standards, a Customs department may accept delayed payments of import taxes and duties from companies that have good credit ratings. This is to avoid the obstruction of trade.

But in the Philippines, the BOC is not allowed to accept delayed payments because the Tariff and Customs Code prohibits such settlement.

"This and many other outdated provisions should be revised so that the BOC could observe international standards in facilitating trade," Morales said. "We hope Congress will pass the proposed Customs modernization bill."

Aside from trade facilitation, revenue generation is another mandate of the BOC. The bureau is the second biggest revenue earner among line agencies, and its contribution has a significant influence on the government's ability to meet its fiscal targets.

The BOC was tasked to collect P223.2 billion in import duties and taxes last year. But the BOC only turned in P210.8 billion in actual revenues. The appreciation of the peso reportedly dragged down its collection performance.

MORALES

Morales said reducing barriers to trade, such as by modernizing trade facilitation practices, would encourage more trade and, therefore, help boost the BOC's revenue collection.

First Gen eyes geothermal projects in Indonesia

By Abigail L. Ho

FIRST GEN CORP., THE NEW MAJORITY owner of PNOC Energy Development Corp., is eyeing geothermal development projects in Indonesia, with two offers for partnership already on the table.

Ricardo Tuason, the new First Gen executive vice president and chief operating officer, said the company was keen on pursuing [the] market because of the huge potential.

"For the longer time, Indonesia has only developed about 800 megawatts of geothermal power in 7 US cents to kilowatt/hour gas and coal at about 4 US cents-5 US cents. And now that prices of gas and coal have reached their record highs, geothermal is an opportunity, which is why they created their medium-term plan where they plan to develop 2,000 MW by 2012," he added.

First Gen president and chief executive Federico Lopez said Indonesia's geothermal potential was even greater than that of the Philippines, which is the world's second largest producer of geothermal power.

Tuason said PNOC-EDC could enter the Indonesian geothermal market as both operator and developer.

"The potential in Indonesia is great, but it also depends on the Indonesian power minister, what [he] can do to address the last two years in attracting investors. But Indonesia is starting to regain investor trust," he said.

Even outside of Indonesia, Lopez said geothermal power was gaining popularity, now becoming an industry "feeling," due mainly to the high prices of oil and coal in the world market as well as the global move to reduce carbon emissions.

Monte Oro's franchise bid starts now

MONTE ORO GRID RESOURCES CORP., together with contractor Mitsubishi Corp. of Japan and Cebuco High Power Corp., has a year to secure a franchise to operate and maintain the National Transmission Corp. for the next 25 years.

Following the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.'s opening and [announcement] to the Monte Oro group of the agreement for the Transco concession, the consortium has 12 months to convince Congress of its capability to take over the national electricity superhighway.

According to PSALM, the agreement contains the conditions for the award of the concession, including the one-year transition within which the Monte Oro Group should acquire a congressional franchise.

"The ball is now in Monte Oro's court. The consortium by itself must prove to Congress that it is worthy of holding a franchise to operate Transco," PSALM president Jose Rizalino said in a statement yesterday.

Prior to executing the three agreements, PSALM said it had verified all the documents submitted by Monte Oro and its partners, following their submission of the highest bid—$3.95 billion—for the Transco concession.

PSALM likewise coordinated with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Bureau of Internal Revenue and other relevant agencies, including Chinese state agencies and the Beijing offices of State Grid, to help in validating the veracity of the documents that the consortium submitted.

According to PSALM, Congress is expected to further scrutinize the consortium's qualifications—financial, technical and legal—to operate, maintain and expand the country's electricity superhighway. Abigail L. Ho

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Editor Cesar D. Platigorsky

Send us your feedback: Inquirer Text Central (go to Messages or 2337-1100) or 183 (Smart) E-mail us: science_health@inquirer.com.ph

Reducing impact of unwelcome organisms in food and drugs

By Charles E. Bohan

FOOD CONTAMINATION is fast becoming a serious public health risk around the world.

Traditionally referred to as the accidental contamination of food, spoilage, unsafe handling of food or mislabeling, the term now even refers to those resulting from terrorist attacks, that is the deliberate act to contaminate food or change the materials' distribution of blood.

According to the World Health Organization, food and waterborne diarrheal diseases are leading causes of illness and death in less developed countries, killing about 1.8 million people annually, most of whom are children.

Several factors have contributed to the rise in outbreaks including greater consumption of fruit fruits and vegetables as well as failure to address filth, decomposition, exposure to pesticides or industrial chemicals and the illegal use of color or food additives during the manufacture or preparation of the food product.

Commonly recognized

Among the commonly recognized food borne infections, according to WHO, are those caused by the bacteria campylobacter (usually found in contaminated undercooked chicken, or other food that has been contaminated with juice dripping from raw chicken); listeria monocytogenes (usually acquired from eating contaminated soft cheeses and cold cuts at the deli counter as well as unpasteurized milk or products made from unpasteurized milk); salmonella (typically originates from animal feces that get into food products); and E. coli O157:H7 (usually contaminates raw meat, fruits and vegetables, or drinking water).

Other sources of food contamination that have recently sparked major international alarm are mad cow disease (bovine spongiform encephalopathy) and avian influenza.

Indeed, the economic fallout of food contamination, whether accidental or deliberate is huge as food companies, for example, have the cost of responding to the incident and recalling the product while suppliers, distributors and food establishments are likely to also suffer losses.

Loss of confidence

Loss of consumer confidence is another economic that could bring down a company's domestic and international sales both in its company's domestic.

Worse, the whole country could be banned from exporting a particular product.

To reduce the incidence of food borne diseases, companies involved in animal husbandry, animal agriculture and food processing have looked for ways to ensure the quality of their products, oftentimes partnering with authorities and other companies specializing in such testing procedures.

One of these companies is DuPont Qualicon, which developed three systems for microbe sampling and testing of dangerous organisms in food items.

The DuPont Qualicon is a business entity within chemical giant DuPont (agriculture and nutrition portfolio) that provides innovative, science-based diagnostic products that can reduce the impact of pathogens and other unwelcomed organisms in food and pharmaceuticals.

Not only accurate

DuPont Qualicon claims these three systems not only produce accurate results but also deliver fast results and reduce the need for highly-skilled technicians and expensive personnel training. They are also ease of storage.

The first of these systems is the BAX System Q7 that offers advanced DNA-based detection for a broad range of sampling applications—from ingredients to end-product tests.

According to DuPont Qualicon, its customers around the world have made the systems an integral part of their quality control systems that let them focus resources on their operations...from dramatically decreasing false positives and minimizing retesting, to reducing employee training and speeding the time to market.

The BAX System has also been adopted by the US Department of Agriculture food safety and inspection service for meat and poultry testing, as well as validated by many international government labs and certified by independent authorities such as AOAC International (an organization devoted to the validation and use of chemical and microbiological analytical methods) and the International Association of Milk, Food and Environmental Sanitarians (an association that lead and coordinate the standards development process and promote the application of those standards).

Speed, accuracy, resolution

The second, called the RiboSensor automated characterization system, provides the speed, accuracy and resolution needed to identify microorganisms and characterize them effectively and consistently.

These determinations can be applied to virtually all bacteria.

Using powerful genetic information, the RiboSensor system provides an automated genetic snapshot—called RiboSensor patterns—of any bacterium in less than eight hours.

RiboSensor patterns characterize various normal isolates, pathogenic spoilage organisms, control strains, beneficial organisms or any bacterium that is important to the pharmaceutical, personal care and food safety industries.

Completing the systems is the Internal Flow System using the GenMelon exhibit packets.

Simple, inexpensive

According to DuPont Qualicon, the Internal Flow System is a simple and inexpensive alternative to traditional culture methods for consistently screening foods for pathogens.

Tests and media are available for salmonella, listeria and E. coli O157:H7. Samples (25 g/ml) are prepared as normal then put into strips have a long shelf and can be stored at room temperature, thus saving valuable refrigerated storage space necessary.

The GenMedia soluble packet, on the other hand, is a convenient packaging system for microbial enrichment media that provides the same performance as bulk powder media with minimal setup time.

It simplifies and shortens the media preparation process, eliminates dust exposure and ergonomic issues associated with handling bulk media powder, reduces storage space requirements and eliminates the need for autoclaving (most often pasteurization) and minimizes waste from expired batches of rehydrated media.

Cutting-edge brain tumor diagnosis and treatment

CarePlus

Christine F. Lhuering

A MALIGNANT BRAIN TUmor is one of the most chilling diagnoses a patient and his or her family can ever receive. A tumor is an abnormal growth caused by cells that reproduce uncontrollably. Unlike tumors in other parts of the body, a brain tumor—even when it is composed of benign or harmless cells—is still considered malignant if the tumor is located in a vital area of the highly complicated and delicate organ.

Most of the damage inflicted by brain tumors is due to their size and location," said Dr. Marcelo Marasigan, director of the International Institute for Neurosciences at St. Luke's Medical Center.

Confined within the skull, a tumor presses on and displaces the brain, exerting pressure that may damage or destroy delicate brain tissue. Many of the symptoms of a brain tumor are caused by this pressure. Sometimes, a tumor may cause blockage of fluid that flows around and through the brain, circulating more pressure.

Brain tissue tumors also cause swelling due to accumulation of fluid. Later, pressure and swelling of tumor [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Beat up Asian bourses recover

HONG KONG—ASIAN MARKETS staged a late day comeback from heavy losses yesterday taking heart from a financial package unveiled by US President George W. Bush aimed at cushioning the economy from a downturn.

The late turnaround in sentiment lifted the dollar to 107.8 yen and away from a 13½ year low that it had struggled to escape from in early trade, while yields on Japanese government bonds ticked up again after hitting 2-year lows.

Stocks initially nosedived in Asia on a frosty barrage of US recession news that added to fears that the world's biggest economy—and Asia's top export market—was in a recession or headed into one.

But Bush told lawmakers on Thursday he would cut rebates for families and breaks for businesses in a stimulus plan that could total $150 billion.

"By now, selling has pretty much run its course, and in this situation a single event could trigger an upward move," said Ryuta Otsuka of Toyo Securities.

Asian stock markets fell around 2 percent in early trade but pulled out of their downward spiral as investors shrugged off the long-awaited US rate-cutting step and targeted value in shares such as Nippon Steel Corp. which closed up 5.24 percent.

Japan's Nikkei average closed up 0.56 percent after earlier hitting its lowest level since late 2005. MSCI's measure of other Asia Pacific stocks was down 0.86 percent by early yesterday afternoon.

Several shares also got back on their feet, with the Korea Composite Stock Price Index closing up 0.65 percent after touching its lowest point since Aug. 27.

The latest nightmare on Wall Street saw the benchmark S&P 500 drop 3 percent to a 10-month low on Thursday on a slump in regional factory activity and hefty losses reported by Merrill Lynch. Reuters

US looks to tax breaks to spur growth

Government officials, politicians scramble to ward off recession

WASHINGTON—WITH THE US economy's prospects growing bleaker seemingly by the day, politicians in both parties have rallied around the three Ts: The measures that are stimulus package words to the steady, targeted and temporary.

One might add the three Rs as well—the ability to deliver the biggest bang for the buck. In that regard, tax rebates have quickly risen to the top of a list that also includes extended unemployment benefits and a boost in benefits for those who receive food stamps.

All three proposals have one very big advantage for politicians worried about what the economy will look like when voters go to the polls in November: They offer the promise of getting assistance out quickly to low and moderate income people who aren't doing so spending the taxes cash.

That is considered crucial given the precarious state of the economy at the moment. The great fear is that consumers, who have been the standout performers during the current expansion, could soon be following under the successive blows of a steep slump in housing, tightening energy costs, a spending credit squeeze, rising unemployment and falling wealth gains.

Some analysts believe the stimulus package may already be too late to prevent a recession, but even the most pessimistic think it is still needed to mitigate the length and severity of a downturn.

Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke has lent considerable weight on the side of a stimulus package on Thursday. "Getting money to low and moderate income people is good in the sense of getting a bang for the buck," he told the House Budget Committee. He said packages in the range of $50 billion to $150 billion (roughly 0.4 percent to 1.1 percent of gross domestic product) would be "reasonable" to help the economy.

Bush has gone down the tax rebate road before. Back in 2001, he added checks of up to $300 per individual and $600 a household as a measure fighting elements of the tax cut plan that had been the centerpiece of his 2000 campaign.

Economists said a comparable single tax rebate in the same package might be $100 to $1,000 (more than 0.4 to more than 0.7 percent of GDP).

Democrats would like to tilt the relief to the poor and lower income taxpayers by adding an increase in unemployment benefits, doubling the normal 26 weeks that a jobless worker can collect benefits, and by also boosting food stamp payments.

Those proposals make economic sense because the more relief that is provided to lower income households, the more money that will get spent quickly, meaning a surer and bigger boost for consumer spending, which accounts for two-thirds of economic activity.

A study showed that Bush's 2001 stimulus package was a success in this regard, with two-thirds of the tax refund payments getting spent in the first six months. The recession that year was mild. It began in March but was over by November, even though the country got hit during that period by the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

A separate study of various stimulus proposals showed that some payments provide a much greater boost than others. Leading the category were extending unemployment benefits, which provides $1.71 (more than 1.6) in spending increases for each $1 (more than 0.9) spent during the first year of the program.

"Extending unemployment benefits helps bolster confidence," said Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Economy.com and the author of the study. "If people don't continue to get their unemployment benefits, they can't bank drastically on their spending and it also scares people around them. It is very debilitating on consumer confidence."

Providing voters with federal support is they don't have to cut their own payments provides $1.24 (more than 1.1) in increased spending for each $1 (more than 0.9) cut), while a targeted tax cut provides $1.19 (more than 1) boost, according to Zandi's study.

The reason these boosts had a big payoff is that they can reflect the fact that the individuals get to put to people who spend the extra benefits quickly. This helps trigger what economists call the "multiplier effect" in that a dollar of increased spending gets recycled through the economy boosting the spending of other people.

By contrast, other proposals which benefit wealthier individuals such as across-the-board tax cuts and reductions in dividends and capital gains taxes were found to return less than their cost during the first year.

Bush wanted this year saying he did not know whether a stimulus plan was needed and if it was, he wanted to make sure that Congress made his first round tax cuts permanent.

But the deteriorating economic situation has now convinced him of the need to offer a stimulus package. Democrats are letting it be known that if Bush is serious about moving quickly he will need to delink the proposal from his drive to make his tax cuts permanent.

The betting is that he will do so and that Democrats and Republicans, each their eye on the November elections, will strike a deal. AP

WB unit to quadruple loans . . .

From page B1

the proceeds to fund short-term social development programs. The loan will likely be 20- or 25-year bonds depending on investor appetite, ing said.

Jonathan Chanwest and Fitch Ratings Investment Corp. are lead managers for the IFC's bond sale.

Among the projects up for funding is the country's biggest hydropower plant, which the government would build as a joint venture headed by local firm Aboitiz Power Corp. for $530 million.

IFC plans to lend $109 million to partly finance Aboitiz Power's purchase of the 360-megawatt Magat power plant.

IFC may also fund a portion of Singapore-based AES Transpower Pte. Ltd.'s $900-million acquisition of the Meralco power plant last year.

IFC provides financing for private firms investing in developing countries to promote economic growth.

The World Bank's private investment arm is also expanding its services in Manila, allowing banks like Bank of the Philippine Islands to tap its advisory services.

IFC signed an agreement with GPI to help the country's biggest lender by market cap to build a sustainable energy financing portfolio.

Through the agreement, IFC will help BPI expand its financial products to help clients such as small and medium manufacturers fund investments in energy efficient projects and equipment. Reuters, Michelle U. Remo

Shares close 2.5% lower

From page B1

Declines overwhelmed advances 100 to 35, while 45 stocks ended unchanged. A total of 2.6 billion shares worth P4.9 billion changed hands.

"The risk aversion continues to be just too high. Investors were just trying to unload positions," said Custodio Bank of Commerce.

It followed Thursday's selloff on Wall Street triggered by a sharp decline in December manufacturing activity. Key fourth-quarter losses by Merrill Lynch, and is warning by Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke that the risks of an economic downturn have grown more pronounced.

"Markets have already priced in the recession, but the question now is whether the economic fallout can be contained to the US or if it will spread to the rest of the world, and just how big the impact will be to emerging economies like the Philippines," said Sison.

The US remains the Philippines' largest trading partner and more than 40 percent of some 8 million Filipinos based abroad are in the US. AFP

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Macquarie
Best Philippines Deal 2006
FinanceAsia

Convertible Bond Offering
SM Investments Corporation
US$300 million
March 2007
Joint Lead Manager and Bookrunner
Macquarie
Best Philippines Deal 2007
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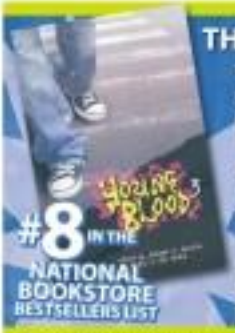

THE BLOOD IS BACK.

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BUSINESS

DBP to acquire gov't stake in Al-Amanah

GSIS, SSS to jointly sell block of shares

By Doris C. Dumlao

HONG KONG—THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE Insurance System and Social Security System have agreed to join the national government's block sale of shares in Al-Amanah Investment Bank to Development Bank of the Philippines.

At the sidelines of a roadshow for overseas Filipinos here, acting Al-Amanah Bank CEO Jaime Pangandaman yesterday said existing shareholders of Al-Amanah had recently formed up an agreement that would allow DBP to fully take over the Islamic bank.

Instead of the DBP having not only the national government's 60 percent interest in the country's first and only Islamic bank, Pangandaman said the SSS, the GSIS and the remaining private minority stockholders have likewise agreed to divest their shares in favor of DBP.

The SSS and the GSIS own a combined 20 percent stake in the Islamic bank. The DBP was prior to this buyout agreement already owns 20 percent of Al-Amanah. The remaining shares [about 1 percent] are held by private Muslim investors.

"[DBP president] Roy [Cruz] was able to convince the SSS and GSIS to sell, so we will end up with 100 percent control of the bank," said Pangandaman, who is also a DBP consultant.

Pangandaman, who was previously a director of Al-Amanah's representing the DBP became acting CEO of the Islamic bank after the Former bank chief, Datu Ali Sangki, was appointed by Malacañang as undersecretary for the Office of Muslim Affairs last year.

Both the government's Privatization Management Office (PMO) and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas earlier had approved the DBP's offer to buy the entire 40 per cent.

DBP assumed over the agreement with the government under the deal.

The bank agreed to pay off all the outstanding advances given by the state to Al-Amanah using the Islamic bank's idle property assets instead of outright cash. DBP and the government are now negotiating how the differential should be settled.

"We hope to finish everything by next week," Pangandaman said.

Aloy Iran failed bids in the past. Pangandaman said the government accepted the DBP's proposal to rehabilitate the Islamic bank and bring in a foreign strategic partner within the next three to five years.

DBP for its part, is bullish on the future of Shariah or Islamic banking, now emerging as a lucrative niche in the global banking arena given the wealth of oil-rich countries in the Middle East.

Al-Amanah Bank is an institution that adheres strictly to the Koran. The law, to laid down in the Koran, prohibits the charging of interest.

Instead, the bank provides funding like an equity investor that shares in the profits or losses of an enterprise. Financing is structured like lease-to-own arrangements, buyback plans, joint purchases and sale agreements, or partnerships.

Al-Amanah Bank's mandate is to promote and accelerate the socioeconomic development of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao by providing banking, financing and investment operations.

Islamic banking has been growing huge attention in the world's financial capitals. About 100 Islamic financial institutions hold at least $500 billion in assets. Their holdings are projected to increase by about 10 percent a year.

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PROPERTY

Edna Cesar D. Manguiat

When the condo size doesn't compute, refute

By Tonia R. Salazar

THE CONTRACT SAYS YOU bought a 24-square-meter condominium unit. But when you receive the title, it says there you only got 23 sq m. What do you do then?

The Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board advises specific measures for "shortchanged" buyers.

HLURB had earlier confirmed to Inquirer Property that there have been "many more" complaints" from condo unit owners, although the board did not indicate the actual numbers.

Mike Dumaya, legal officer of the HLURB, said discrepancies cannot be avoided, and it rarely happens one cannot file a problem, he or she should consider the following steps:

1 **The unit owner may choose a refund** of the entire payment or demand the **developer to convey the size of the unit.** If there's no possibility to adjust the unit physically, then ask for the refund.

2 **The owner should also review the master deed of restrictions.** This deed stipulated the rights and obligations of both parties—developer and buyer—such as what belongs to the common area or up to what percentage is the unit owner.

3 **If it turns out that the measurement is short,** follow suggestion No. 1. Dumaya explained that should a conflict arise between a developer choosing to refund the excess payments and a buyer demanding the unit be readjusted physically, the settlement of the case would take longer. "The HLURB, being the quasi-judicial agency, would have to decide on the issue," he said.

4 **The unit owner can file a complaint with the HLURB and the adjacent unit conduct an ocular inspection upon the unit owner's request.** The HLURB's authorized engineers technical services unit can then conduct actual measurements of the unit. Afterward, what is indicated on the title would be followed.

5 **The standard way of measuring** the unit is to measure from one face of the wall up to the other face of the wall, according to Section 6 of the Condominium Act or Republic Act 4726. This is unless otherwise expressly declared on the master deed of restrictions, said engineer Jovencio Cuaso, head of HLURB technical services.

6 Can unit owners have an independent technical body measure the unit? Dumaya said **the HLURB cannot assure owners that the findings of an independent body would be acceptable or conclusive for HLURB.**

Buyers can get in touch with the HLURB for further questions or to lodge their complaints at 9275961 or at www.hlurb.gov.ph.

staron
LUXECRAFT PHILS., INC.

TWO raised pedestrian crosswalk extends from one sidewalk to the other side of the road.

On walkways and overpasses

WHY DID THE CHICKEN CROSS the road? To reach the overpass.

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando has put so much effort into promoting pedestrians over cars. So in the war on traffic we might be in the concrete jungles of Metro Manila. In some extent, he has been successful.

Some developers even took for good intentions to a higher level, as seen in Bonifacio High Street, developed by Commercial Industrial Inc. There, the pedestrian crossway is raised so that it is elevated at the sidewalk. This makes crossing easier and safer since vehicles are forced to slow down, as when approaching a bumper.

In addition, the surface is made from a durable nonslip material, which may be expensive but scored well on public safety. This mainly makes climbing the steps less tiring and slipping on steps or depressions. We can only hope that installations such as these are adopted by the public sector throughout Metro Manila.

Unsafe pedestrian walkways

Sadly, there are a number of areas where our pedestrian walkways are not safe. Aside from it being the favorite hangout of pickpockets, snatchers and hold up men, it could

LIVING ARCHITECTURE

Marcos de Guzman Jr

likewise be physically unsafe. Take for example the overpasses in front of Ateneo University on Katipunan Avenue, some of the steps have already eroded and have yet to be repaired. My daughter was one of the unfortunate ones who have fallen while using this overpass. Thankfully it's coming out of it with only some bruises and scratches.

On the overpass in front of Marian College, the paving gets very slippery when it rains. On Julia Vargas Avenue, in the middle of the Ortigas Center, the overpass steps rise quite high, rendering those going near building codes, making them practically unsafe.

There seems to be enough space to add another step at the end, therefore, since the height had been smoothing the steps, they seem to conform nicely to commonly built long stair measures and not ones with some erratic. The risers are definitely too high and irregular and the treads too narrow. The metal railing that is supposed to prevent slippage or such step actually serves as a hindrance to those who are physically challenged.

Walking should be encouraged

Walking is healthy and should be encouraged. If only our streets are not so polluted as they are now and our walkways are safe from debris and criminal elements, then the ultimate can be free and safe from unnecessary stress.

As it is, it seems safer to cross the busy roads rather than take one chance on those pedestrian overpasses. Millions are then facilities and more cars and attention must be given to their design and construction.

It is always good to do things right the first time. That way we protect lives, we save taxpayers' money and we contribute to the welfare of the community and the environment. In addition, we encourage people to walk and save on fuel. I look forward to the time when people can walk more and when Metro Manila Invasion Day want to and not because they have to.

Its never ask why the chicken crossed the street. You just might get stoned answer.

Cleaning out the kitsch

I SPENT A FEW DAYS IN MACAU OVER the Christmas season. I thought the city was going to bring back memories of some dark, moist times in my youth, when I made day trips from Hong Kong to this old Chinese-Portuguese town known as a casino hideaway. Located in China's Pearl River Delta, the Shanghai of today is a far cry from the little town I once visited, and is now known as the booming gambling capital of Asia.

The word "casino" has long been associated with secrecy and glamour. But in the design field, casinos are associated with poor taste, pretense, vulgarity and vulgarity. Despite the fact that the word "casino" can still be evocative of elegance, can God-shining glamour thanks to James Bond), it still instinctively connotes kitsch.

DESIGN DIMENSIONS

Isabel Borreguer Asuncion

More kitsch

The skyline of Macau has changed dramatically since 10 years ago, as casino hotels opened one after the other. Today it is clustered by massive buildings, odd-shaped structures, flashing neon and LED lights and exaggerating have beams that puncture the inner night sky. Last year, Macau's annual gaming revenues outstripped those of Las Vegas, and with many new casinos opening this year, maybe Las Vegas will start earning the mistaken "Mecca of the US." And Asia will have more kitsch.

On the more human interior space, the common curse though their traditional elements of patterned polished floors, shiny brass accents, faux marble-and columns, bombastic floral arrangements, gold fittings, dropping crystals and glitzy beveled mirrors. It sounds much like the traditional casino as it could be someone's tacky over-ornate home.

Advancing visual watch is like amassing unwanted garbage. The psychology of excess is not new. Psychologist Sigmund Freud through books and magazines appreciating and detailing over the exquisiteness of clean, streamlined, spaces and wonder why people would fill their homes with anything for the clarity of design and embrace and use it in our own clutter and overadornment that ruins what could exist. While he a very positive and enriching to our concepts, he also seems to be against anything that is given, to buy what we don't need and to keep everything we have forever, often lead to meaningless, for unless spaces devoid of true embellish.

Game houses of gilt, glitz, bling

What is the entire psychology as that of casino design, for as the gambler seeks more, the casino seeks to give them huge game houses of gilt, glitz and bling. For the design industry it brings in big business, but it also breeds bad taste. Maybe we should take it all as fun value, after all, the gambler industry is more about entertainment than high art. It does not seek to be virtuous about its contribution to design, it simply seeks to evoke, and to evoke it does.

Our private spaces though, are a different state of affairs. Because they are not temporary places for awe and wonder, we have to take a more tempered approach. We have to consider how it will wear, it will age, it will be maintained. And it was not the glitz of the casinos that made him so glamourous...it was the dapper suit, clean shaven face and combed-back hair. It sounds like the better approach to our spaces.

FLAMBOYANT forms and colored lights are the central tradition at the New Grand Casino.

Living by design at The Manors

GINA COSUNJE COULD NOT help but feel pleased when she received from the architect's office investing on the green church on the planning they were putting up on the unit.

"It is actually a lovely scene, and I painted the sky and the sea green," Gina explains, referring to the abstract painting hanging on one wall of the Cosunje home in The Manors at Celebrity Place which she designed.

Gina has been designing interiors for more than 10 years now. She started young, at 20, just years before finishing college. Three children later and with more than time in her hands, she decided to enroll at the Philippine School of Interior Design. She then set up her own firm, Imagine Design. "Imagine is Italian for design," she explains.

Milestone

Her first client was BMD Holdings. She designed their showroom in Makati when they moved from their original office in Binondoan. "It was a milestone since that was when they first trusted me enough to give me a project without a client's address," she relates. She also designed the interiors of BMD's first housing development in Mandaue, Pueblo Verde.

Gina likes designing model units. "I like working from a blank slate," she says. She makes sure that each design is different from the others. "I do not like repeating myself," she says. She looks at the other model units in the developments and after consulting with the architect, designs that is the opposite of what is existing. "The model unit is a marketing tool," she explains, "and I like to give the sales force different options."

Evaluate the space

The first thing she does is evaluate the space. "I imagine the people who will be living in it," Gina says. "I like to make it livable." Unit buyers usually like to keep the interiors exactly as she designed it. She gets materials and accessories mostly off the rack, and she keeps the price tags on the pieces so the new owners will know where to get them. Some of the furniture are custom-made, scaled to fit the available space. Color plays an important role. "It is the most visible tool," she says.

In the model unit of the Parchment building in The Manors, Gina worked with the original ivory and eggshell scheme of the walls. "It's very subtle," she points out. "The light, monochromatic scheme opens up the space." The lighting fixtures are both decorative and functional. The cabinets and shelves, built into the walls seem to blend, adding to the sense of space.

The main walls are brought to life by the abstract paint strips in bright yellow, green and the sofa, and deep red in the dining area. The predominantly pink abstract painting in the master bedroom is called "Bond." "It is romantic happy emotions," Gina says. "It has to be happy because we are selling a dream."

English-inspired

The Manors is an English-inspired exclusive residential community at the quieter side of Cebu City. Series and condominium buildings are nestled within the Celebrity Club complex between Jagobiao Road and Capitol Hills Drive, Old Banilad to Talamban. The Manors is the ideal home for the young upwardly mobile cultured-set willing a place of solace, away from the noise, of the workplace, an ideal place to raise a family.

In the Manors, buyers do not have to worry about where to dream home as all units are now ready for occupancy. A minimum of 10 percent down payment is required and you can already move in to your very own Manors unit.

The Manors is another prime community development of DMCI Homes, the country's only triple-A builder/developer backed by 30 years of experience in building premium landmarks in the country such as the Oakridge Center of the Philippines, Makati Shangri-La Hotel, Rockwell Center and Ayala Tower One. DMCI Homes now applies the same experience in building first class residences for young families with modest income aspiring to live comfortable in a quiet and secure environment.

THE "DWISE" abstract painting above the bed represents happy emotions.

GINA: Comes in her life as the turn-dining wall with the bed abstract painting.

Nature-inspired community in Carmel Ridge

STA. LUCIA REALTY AND DEVELOPMENT embarked on a real estate project that provides homeowners comfort and beautiful investment. Combined with quality and affordability, Carmel Town Cantabang aims to maximize each dweller's experience that answer the distinct taste of their living requirements, at the same time supplementing their leisure activities.

Situated at the foothills of Tagaytay Ridge, it offers access to cool, crisp breeze from the northwest and the wide-open lakeside range of Laguna lake in the southeast. Securing its entire development, the well-planned community is equipped with amenities that include sports, recreational and functional facilities including the Mira Country Club.

Its state-of-the-art design and construction provides living-new residences that allow residents to enjoy life in a resort-like setting spaces amid the rush in the competitive and fast-changing lifestyle.

CARMEL Town Cantabang allows residents to celebrate life the way they want.

Filipino architect learns from US HMO mess

AFTER COMPLETING INDUSTRY tours with UK-based physicians, architect Gilbert L. Yu prescribes a remedy for affordable healthcare in the US.

Gilbert C. Yu, chair and president of GBW Architects, Engineers and Project Development Consultants, has known for some time that the healthcare crisis in the Philippines are appallingly unresolved. After speaking to a group of 100 board physicians, Yu was shocked that the same situation attacks both the local housing industry and the American medical industry—the only middleman.

Worse than the disease

In the United States, the medical practitioners explained to Yu that health maintenance Organizations (HMOs) provide health insurance coverage for employees. Individuals and doctors both—lawsuits with—provided to members unable to obtain maintenance that, sometimes, they subscribed to. Yu observed that HMOs are more pharmacies to please doctors...while the customer insurers, patients, are the customers. If the medicines are deemed to be too expensive, drugs for patients, therefore, are determined not so available to others, but cost.

"The HMOs started to dictate to the doctor and to the patient the terms of their relationship," just how much can be charged, how much can be charged, how much a patient likely more, consultation is limited to just 15 to 20 minutes," he says, shaking his head.

Yu says that the healthcare system should be professional decisions. "It was told, despite these policymakers calculating based on their expertise, it almost seems HMOs' industry is more friendly with the financial aspect of providing care—and not enough with the medical...thereby detaching themselves from the real needs of patients.

In found unfortunate parallelisms between the real estate industry he has been involved with for 30 years and the healthcare system HMOs have in 1971 and the American medical industry when meddling by middlemen, doctor-patient relationships and proper supplies with profit are provided.

Build-to-own

"It's innovative. Build-To-Own system allows Filipinos to own homes that are 30 percent less than similar condominium units. How? Simply put, it is a system that uses fundamental principle of homeownership, now as seen in these times: the architect-homeowner relationship. Gonzalez, he says real estate developers handing homeowners from architects by turning units into commodities and selling them for a profit.

The Build-To-Own is mainly treat between architects and home owners, combined with a TAS insurance, unlocks benefits for "unsolicited home owners."

To provide the high margins of inexperienced developers because GBW, holder of over 1,000 awards, "will practice only what we preach." In addition, the former is that we gather multiple clients to sign individual units and engage materials with us."

Basically, GBW charges the homeowner a professional fee for managing the building of their unit at direct cost, which means eliminating the arbitrary mark-ups that add to the selling price of many developers.

Unique trustee service

Moreover, GBW's answer has allowed to acknowledge a unique trustee service, together with Banco de Oro. For financial success, the homeowner deals directly with GBW and financial institutions, the homeowner deals directly with GBW and financial institutions since that this means good strategy to the eventual development, not to receiving debts incurred from past projects or diverting it to other projects.

"Homeowners pay their construction expenses directly to Banco de Oro. Each project has a separate account of its own, not even by a third party project manager," he says. Among other benefits of this deal, Architect-to-Own clients of Banco de Oro's financial institutions can avail of loans from up to 10 percent per annum in interest rate charges compared to the 18 to some financing "deals" of other developers.

There are many other rewards that a close architect-homeowner relationship offers, not least among them GBW's proven ability to navigate a project not to be worsened, thus averting the risk of being construction costs, as well as saving the homebuyer untold expenses as he attends the completion of his unit.

"The architect and end user a once again reunited in the realization to build a better, affordable and safer home for the Filipino family of a middle-class," he says. "Shelter is a right, not a financial aspiration."

A well-placed door can bring happiness, prosperity to dwellers

By Tess S. Samaniego

A BEAUTIFUL DOOR IS likened to a beautiful mouth. That is, when a door is well placed, it can attract and bring into the home much happiness and prosperity to its dwellers.

So says, Judy Adler, the first Filipina designated as feng shui master by Master Joseph Yu, founder of the Oceania-based Feng Shui Research Center.

In particular, Adler says the position of the main door is crucial since it is used more than any other door in the house.

She explains that "the architectural main door is the one through which visitors enter and is considered the 'chi' mouth of the home. A well-placed main door entices auspicious good health, wealth and longevity."

To attract more positive energy, Adler gives us a few tips on how to make the most out of our main doors:

1 Main door size should be in proportion to the rest of the house. If it is too large it can cause financial difficulties. If it is too small it can cause petty arguments.

2 Door frames should be straight and sturdy since these are considered the supporting poles of the family. These could help grow family harmony. The door should be constructed of good material and be pleasing to the eye.

3 Place lamps outside the front door. Adler says this is similar to placing guardians in your yard. But these lamps should not block the door. Poorly placed posts (or trees) can cause ill, material loss and illness.

4 Main door should not face the corner of another house, a tree or a post as it can encourage sickness and financial difficulties. Adler reminds us that the area in front of the door (called "ming tang") should be open and not too close to another building, wall, hill, or mountain. Otherwise, poorly placed doors can promote arguments about petty matters.

5 Avoid having main doors open onto a path or road that has a "T" or a "Y" configuration. The T can take away wealth as well as confuse the mind regarding which direction to go. Being at the end of a T junction brings a rush of chi to your door, which can be genuinely difficult...especially for a business.

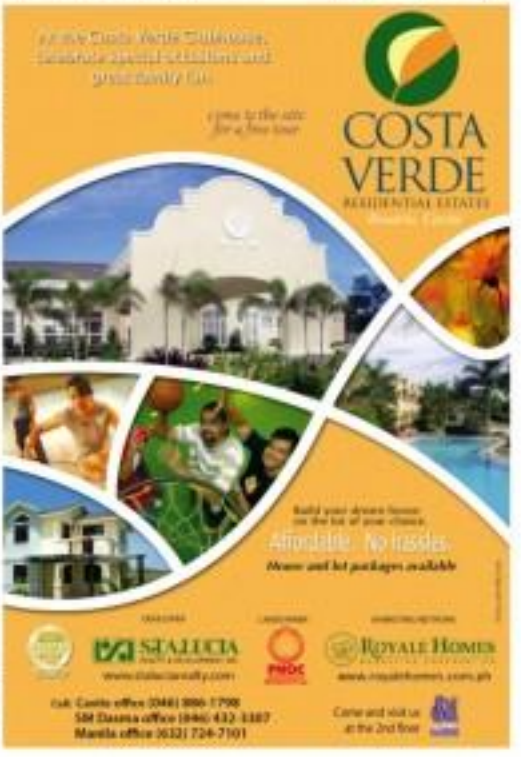
6 Avoid having main doors face directly a church, temple, monastery or cemetery. This can make your home vulnerable to the "yang" spirits that inhabit such places looking for "yin" places to live.

7 Avoid having main doors face a narrow space between two buildings. The chi moves through the narrow space very fast and can cause many problems, particularly with health.

Adler notes however that even if your door is not in the best place, it can still attract more harmony for us long as it is beautiful...more than an ugly door.

Also, it is best to keep the area around the door clean and adorned with beautiful objects and flowers.

(Source: www.doors-feng_shui.com)



THE BLUE Coast Residences is RHI's ultra high-end residential subdivision in Cebu.

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ARTIST'S rendition of The Blue Coast Residences clubhouse

Robinsons intensifies nationwide presence

By Charles S. Bakas

ROBINSONS HOMES RECENTLY announced the launch of three more projects located in Cebu and Pampanga. This is a move that is expected to firm up the company's presence nationwide.

With the ongoing developments of The Blue Coast Residences in Mactan, Cebu; Aspen Heights in Consolacion, Cebu and Hacienda Inez in San Fernando, Pampanga, the booming and land development division of Robinsons Land Corp. now has more than 30 projects completed and still developing all over the Philippines.

"The company would like to establish a strong presence all over the country. In the process we are also providing more and more homebuyers with quality communities," said Manolo Alfonso, RHI senior vice president and general manager.

First high-end Cebu project

The Blue Coast Residences is RHI's first high end residential subdivision located on Barangay Punta Engaño in Lapu-Lapu City (Mactan Island).

Being the Magellan Sea, this 3.07-hectare residential resort project is strategically situated near world-class hotels and spa resorts, including the Mactan Shangri-La Hotel and Spa Cebu Hilton Hotel.

Moreover, it is less than 5 minutes (drive) from the Mactan International Airport.

"The development incorporates American-influenced architecture while offering first class amenities such as gym and guesthouse, soaking and spa pool, infinity pool, a food's fountain, gazebo, multi-purpose clubhouse and mall/picnic hall and administration building," Alfonso described.

Mid-cost residential

Aspen Heights, on the other hand, is a 25-hectare mid-cost residential development located in the municipality of Consolacion, some 12 kilometers north of Cebu City.

"Aspen Heights is set to become the next top Daisy in Cebu, after the successful launch of The Blue Coast Residences in Mactan island," Alfonso announced.

Because of its elevated location, rolling hills and manicured gardens, Alfonso said RHI designed Aspen Heights after its namesake in the United States—Aspen in Colorado.

He also added that from the development's highest point, the entire island of Mactan can be viewed.

By north, RHI also launched its latest mid-cost residential/commercial development on Hizonthai Highway in Brgy. Lindalan, San Fernando, Pampanga.

Joint venture

"After a successful series of project launches in Angeles City and Mandaluyong, Robinsons Land Corp. recently entered a joint venture with the Hizonda family to develop the 4.5-hectare property in San Fernando City," Alfonso said.

He added that the Hizonda Inez will have a Spanish-Mediterranean theme offering a minimum lot size of 147 square meters.

He also said its future homeowners will enjoy unlimited access to the clubhouse, basketball court, swimming pool and open space/parade areas.

"Expect more projects coming up as RHI will continue to serve the market by providing quality housing projects all over the Philippines," Alfonso stressed.

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Ground Control: Mr. Jun Rivas, Lito Lazaro

Joey Cuerdo grew up next to a golf course. Needless, he swept competently for his aunt's tennis team, and then quickly sidetracked into mountaineering. He went on to become a deft mountaineer.

But Joey was just warming up—he got into rowing and became a member of the Philippine Dragonboat Rowing Team for two years. Then he took crew climbing, which became his primary sport for a good number of years.

Then he went into bodysurfing, and then sailing, which not only brought him back into the water, but also gave him the freedom of the outdoors. He never joined surf competitions because for him, it's a non-competitive sport.

"Living at least three hours every hour the seasons and spot, I felt that experiencing the waves mattered more than scoring points."

Where did you start playing sports?

"I've always loved to play, run around in open spaces, jump into rivers, play tag in the swimming pool.

Who's the athlete that you look up to the most?

My dad...he was an older guy who managed to excel in golf by squeezing in playtime after work. He was hooked up both in the work field and in the golf course, not because of his position, but because he could beat nearly anyone on the golf course during Sundays.

What do you get from sports?

Sports forces me to think and focus on the immediate tasks at hand; widening the lungs for the reach hold on the climbing wall, catching the drop drop down line of the wave, or looking for that second wind when trudging up a slope on a regular afternoon jog. That simple mental simplicity of thought will allow me to relax and let go, if only for a moment, of everything else crowding my mind. After the activity, after the rush of it all, I'm ready to start afresh again, refreshed, recharged, and raring to go!

Alvin Pura is not someone you underestimate. He looks frame may tick you, but the guy's a real roughie. For this photo shoot, we asked him if he was okay with climbing a low wall. He told us, "It's okay if it's high."

Alvin plays ultimate frisbee, rock climbing, skateboarding, sailing, and volleyball. He's done the Boracay Open, the Singapore Open, and the WPRC The DARE Bouldering Competition, among heaps of other tourneys.

How you always imagined yourself to be an athlete someday?

I started when I was in elementary—I was a member of the volleyball varsity team. Did I imagine myself to be an athlete back then? Nope, I have always just liked to play sports for the fun of it.

Who's the athlete that you look up to the most?

Muhammad Ali.

What do you get from sports?

I tend to have asthma attacks, but playing sports made my lungs and heart healthier. Sports makes me feel strong. It achieves action. I always feel some sort of enjoyment, self-worth, and sense of purpose after playing. I am able to socialize with old friends and discover different people and cultures, and I'm able to travel.

I've learned a lot of life lessons in sports...to stay focused, to never give up, to pick myself up when I fall, to accept defeat, and to overcome my fears.

I have the adrenaline rush ... and its cool to be an athlete!

Loco for motion

For some, sport is life

SWINGING BETWEEN the extremes of having the thrilling sensorium of magic and then being slammed into the gray-scene of a highway-or-an overcast day—my childhood can be summed up by this description.

Once, when I was around 6, I painted a jungle on my bedroom wall. I had read this book about these kids that drew a jungle and then walked into it and had this amazing adventure. So I drew a jungle on my wall because I was delirious to have the same experience—but I wasn't disappointed when I didn't walk into it because it still felt as if I might have been able to.

Looking back, I know that I wasn't alone with the whole painting obsession. I bet all the other kids in the neighborhood did the same thing. As kids, we all seem to possess that enormous passion to jump into something we're not able to discover something the other leaves feels haven't seen.

Years later, I joined the varsity climbing team in school, and found that the value of the adrenaline-pumic given by a sport is immeasurable—much better than drawing jungles on concrete.

Sport is the real thing—when the beating of your heart is at its peak, when you're sweating like crazy when you win your first medal in the first major tips, when you lose by a technicality. Sport is life.

The few people on this spread are role-life athletes who come from different ages and backgrounds. They represent kids who drew jungles like mad, expressing a new adventure every half hour.

They all started hitting the courts and the rooms at such young ages, and they have been painting jungles ever since. What else is competitive play if not journeying into the extremes of passion and emotion?

JP Sabido started with Little League rag football and Little League baseball. A few years after, he began his training in taekwondo. Now, he's someone you don't mess around with. Aside from the martial arts, the guy's two-time sepak

He's the team captain of the Philippine National Taekwondo Team, the Philippine National Sparmaking Team, the UP Taekwondo Varsity Team, and the UP Chinese Sport Society. JP's scored lots of medals for the country.

Have you always imagined yourself to be an athlete someday?

Inevitable! I believe I was born to be an athlete.

Who's the athlete that you look up to the most?

At the moment, none. But if there were an athlete that I'd look up to the most, it would be an athlete that's not only a champion in his sport, but also a champion in life.

Why is playing sports important to you?

The word "sport" is a better way of saying play. Let's take it from a child's perspective. Why is it important for a child to play? This gives the child the opportunity to develop socially, mentally and physically. These aspects are highly essential towards achieving a more holistic development in a child.

Physically, a child develops skills that are related to the demands in our everyday living like agility, reactive time, body coordination, balance, and strength.

The same goes for people who engage in sports as one gets older, his mental, emotional, and physical skills slowly deteriorates. There will come a point wherein one will need that quick reaction time to catch a falling glass of water or to maintain the balance to keep one upright on a slippery floor. This is why engaging in sports is important. Just like what Mark Twain says, "We are athletes of life."

Photographs by Carlo Tolentino
Styling by Gigie Locsin
Makeup by Kris Lee
Digital Imaging by Ben Lee
Shot on location at the BLU CPA School of Design and Art Building
Special Thanks to Kris Fernandez

Cuerdo: Jacket, Bench. Shirt, Bench. Pants, Bench. Shoes, Bench. Watch, Bench. Sunglasses, Bench. Necklace, Bench. Bracelet, Bench. Ring, Bench.

Sabido: Jacket, Bench. Shirt, Bench. Pants, Bench. Shoes, Bench. Watch, Bench. Sunglasses, Bench. Necklace, Bench. Bracelet, Bench. Ring, Bench.

Pura: Jacket, Bench. Shirt, Bench. Pants, Bench. Shoes, Bench. Watch, Bench. Sunglasses, Bench. Necklace, Bench. Bracelet, Bench. Ring, Bench.

Nicole Wulbrich is not your ordinary college senior. While most people's brains are stretching their heads wondering what Chowfun is really about, she's running it out in taekwondo, frisbee, swimming, dancesport, and climbing practices.

She's received a long of medals from international meets including the US Open, the Korea Open, and the World Taekwondo Championships.

Have you always imagined yourself to be an athlete someday?

Since I was 6 years old. I've been trying different sports. I know back then that I'd be an athlete because my parents have been in this sports too. They've been encouraging us to be good in sports, and they really support us when we compete.

Who's the athlete that you look up to the most?

Honestly, no one. (Laughs) Because my parents and I set goals and we don't really focus on others. We focus on ourselves. When we set goals, we do it! We work hard and try our best to achieve them.

What does playing sports do to you?

Sports balances my everyday life. It's my outlet to relax from my busy school life because of my achievements in sports, I get scholarships. Aside from that, playing keeps me physically fit.

Pen Nepomuceno is into rock climbing, mountain climbing, rowing, and sweating it in triathlons. She just got into the whole triathlon thing last year, but she insists she's a pro.

"I was aware of the races that I joined, but I still need a lot of improvement, before triathlon, I was into adventure racing for around four years, and I did penny-ante in that area too...or maybe I was just lucky with my teammates."

When did you start playing sports?

I have always been an active person. I mean say that my parents influenced me the most when it comes to sports. My mom was a runner and my dad was a cyclist. I only started out my sports training in college...when I joined the UP Mountaineers. It was during that time when I started doing things like climbing and rowing, sports that I never thought I would engage in because I came from an exclusive school and we were very sheltered then.

Who's the athlete that you look up to the most?

I look up to a lot of athletes that I can't just give one name. First, the ladies who became the first Filipinas to climb Everest, Anne Saliemen, Noelle Weinreder, and Rustia Dayrit-Jose.

They're also my nominees in UP Inspirasyon and I look up to them because they have shown that hope up Pinay. They're even stronger than most men.

Then there's Sander Arcadio, the No. 1 triathlete in the Philippines. She's beastie and beats I always watch in amazement every time she races.

What do you get from sports?

If I wasn't doing sports, I'd probably be cranky all the time. I'm addicted to training. It's where I get my energy. It's my life. It's very fulfilling for me that I'm doing something productive, something that makes my mind and body healthy so they say look great, and feel great!

A diario novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

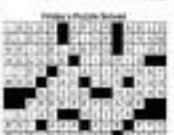
To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA

DAILY CROSSWORD

by Mariano Aggarao
Concord, NH

Today's Puzzle Solved



HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

CONCEPTS SO DOKU

Concepts Sudoku By Dave Green

1		8		3				4
			7		4			
				9				2
	6						3	
5		9				2		1
	2						9	
4				1				
			9		3			
6				7		8		5

Difficulty Level ★★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answers to previous puzzle

9	6	5	3	4	7	8	2	1
2	7	8	5	1	6	3	9	4
1	4	3	8	9	2	6	5	7
3	5	1	6	7	8	9	4	2
7	8	9	4	2	5	1	7	6
4	2	7	1	6	9	5	8	3
8	5	1	2	3	4	7	6	9
6	3	2	9	7	8	4	1	5
5	9	4	7	8	1	2	3	6

Power Pictures by Pinoy Pencilers

Filipino comic book artists help shape some never-ending mythologies

By Oliver M. Palattiao

BEHIND SOME OF THE POPULAR comics currently being released internationally are Filipino artists, delightful geeks of all ages with their distinct takes on different heroes—from those in heavy-flying battlesuits to those in soft robes—and their traditionally Eastern flavorfills.

Pinoy pencilers and inkers started getting attention for their work abroad decades back. Some outstanding, like Whilce Portacio, Leinil Francis Yu and Jay Anacleto, became sought-after talents in the '90s. They continue to draw for major American publishers such as Marvel and DC Comics.

Not long after, other Philippines-based penciller—Glass House Graphics' Wilson Tortosa, Carlo Pagulayan, and Harvey Tolibao, among others—debuted and began making waves with a number of noteworthy assignables, as well. Once again, fellow Pinoys' sensory and storytelling skills reshaped some previously established fantasy realms.

WILSON TORTOSA

Manga-inspired artist Wilson Tortosa, 30, has pencilled titles such as Top Cow's 13 issue "Battle of the Planets," "Rann/Ranbir" and "City of Heroes." But before landing his first mainstream project, he worked on home-brewed comic books like Chaos Comics' "Jade" and Gutsu Entertainment's "Bastion Girl" in 2003.

Tortosa also lent his artistry to the 30-installment "Age of an Heroes" web comic, and is now illustrating "Cimplers," written by Brian Bloom, who described the series as "a star-spanning space opera that serves as a metaphor for worship and marriage." It will be launched in 2006.

Mind, pierced off.

"Battle of the Planets." It was the closest experience to working with illustrator Alex Ross. Plus, I'm such an otaku, so the thrill of working on a project that involves giving life to the transformation universe is priceless!

Fuelled training.

The basics I learned back in Fine Arts helped a lot; it speeds up the drawing process. It's also very helpful, especially when coming up with different styles because it's important to keep basic anatomy in mind.

Art advice.

To be a good comic book or manga artist, you not only need the ability to draw everything well, you also need the ability to tell a story. A cool or pretty drawing style may get you started, but good storytelling will keep you there.

Biggest art influences.

A lot of people, like Art Adams, Whilce Portacio, Jim Lee, Alex Ross, Bernardo Bermejo Tanada, Fabian Rodrigo, Hiroaki Samura and Masamune Shirow.

Thoughts on Pinoy comics artists.

I believe Pinoy artists are very flexible, highly adaptable, and some of the best in the world.

Dream project.

I wish I can write well enough so I can draw my own characters and publish my own story.

HARVEY TOLIBAO

The former inker artist and noted sprayy messenger from Cebu known (but he wanted to draw for a living since grade school. Harvey Tolibao, now 26, is thrilled that he's drawing comic books full-time. The artist penciled three issues of Dark Horse's "Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic" and Marvel Comics' recent "Iron Man" issue. He also illustrated a segment in "What If: Civil War" and is currently busy working on a "Young Avengers" issue.

He admits that he's improved immensely since he started showing art samples to his agent, who reviewed his portfolio and told him, "This is the spit on Superman I've ever seen!"

"WHAT If Civil War" by Harvey Tolibao

Most proud of.

My "Star Wars" work! The colorist, Jay David Ramos, is a Cebuano like me.

Formal training.

None, but I learned a lot from Carlo Pagulayan, Stephen Segovia, Leinil Yu and other artists. I observed and I had to be consistent with anatomy. There should be correct perspectives, proper placement of muscles, and consistent head sizes/sizes. Aside to room, all starting long-long drawing.

Art advice.

Just draw. Every time you feel like it, draw. And listen to what people say to improve. Prayers long-long drawdown.

Biggest art influences.

I study every comics artist, at some point, wanted to be like Jim Lee. But lately, Clifford "Terry" Chiarot. I have many influences, including other artists.

Thoughts on Pinoy comics artists.

Many young artists right now don't know that back in the 1960s and 1970s, Filipino artists were some of the best & hardworkers. Jose Alfredo Alcala, Francisco V. Coching, Nestor Redondo, nothing going solo!

Dream project.

A "Lord of the Rings" comic book adaptation! I really want to work on something like that. But working on "Star Wars" is a dream come true!

CARLO PAGULAYAN

Carlo Pagulayan, 29, considers himself fortunate that he landed an important pencilling gig back in 2002. "I was really lucky," he says. "They were looking for a replacement artist for 'Hulk' vs. I was in the right place at the right time." The longtime Batangas resident has drawn other prominent Marvel titles, including several issues of "Emma Frost" and Marvel's Adventures: Fantastic Four." He's thankful that his recent "Incredible Hulk" stint, where he visualized writer Greg Pak's epic transformation of the mild-mannered man-monster to the "Planet Hulk" storyline, challenged him to be more creative.

Pagulayan, an industrial Engineering graduate, is currently illustrating the annual "New Avengers" annual. He admits that he barely remembers lessons he learned in school, especially those involving Math, but he finally excels becoming artistic with like-minded people.

Mind pierced off.

"Dad would have "Incredible Hulk."

Formal training.

None. Back in school, when classes got boring, my classmates and I drew on teachers!

Art advice.

It's like to say aside from "practice," understand the lines you use and note your different ways of shading, like hatching. If you understand why a particular technique is used, it's easier to draw. If you choose a style, make sure that you're comfortable with it, because if you're just going to copy, you really don't know how the artists you're emulating think or approach things.

Biggest art influences.

Jim Quesada was one of my earliest influences. My friends and I liked his reading card drawings back in the '90s. I discovered Image Comics around that time. I preferred Marc Silvestri's style over Jim Lee's. I liked his manner more. Brandon Peterson, David Finch, and Travis Charest, Leinil Yu and Whilce Portacio also influenced me.

Thoughts on Pinoy comics artists.

Such fame as mga artists noon! Aside from Alfredo Alcala, I admire Alex Nino.

Dream project.

I'm already done "Hulk!"

"WHAT If Submarine?" by Carlo Pagulayan

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super

Sweeney makes a killing

'Sweeney Todd' is bringing back renewed energy to the genre of film musicals with a singing Johnny Depp and gallons and gallons of blood

By Wenggie Gallego

IT IS NOT A BLOODY SHAME that "Sweeney Todd" is doing so well in the theaters. Winning the Golden Globe for Best Motion Picture (Comedy or Musical) is a pretty sweet deal, too. We would have all loved to hear Johnny Depp's speech at the ceremony since they awarded him with the Best Actor (Comedy or Musical) trophy but then again, there wasn't a show. Lots of critics and Oscar predictions have high hopes for the highly stylistic and gory adaptation of the Tony Award-winning musical. Surprisingly, the biggest competitors are films whose titles somehow resonate with the theme of "Sweeney Todd"—"Atonement" and "There Will Be Blood."

Tim Burton's excellent adaptation follows the story of one barber, Benjamin Barker (Depp), who returns to London after being exiled for a crime he didn't commit. Framed by the sinister Judge Turpin (Alan Rickman) who pines for Barker's wife, Barker hopes to be reunited with his family but discovers that he has nothing to return to. Mr. Lovett (Helena Bonham Carter) has opened a pie shop just below his old house and tells him that his daughter Johanna has become Turpin's ward and his wife drank poison. Fueled by numbness and grief, Barker assumes the name Sweeney Todd and resumes his work as a homicidal barber hoping that one day it is the judge who will sit on his chair and then Turpin's throat will meet the sharp end of his razor. Of course, there's also blood and gore, cannibalism, love at first sight, murderers, and recently peppered throughout the film. Oh, and there's singing too! It is a musical, after all.

Pitch Perfect

In 1979, "Sweeney Todd" won the Tony award for Best Musical. The songs are all intricate and complex, signatures of its multi-awarded composer and lyricist Stephen Sondheim, and the story is both dark and rich which is Burton's area of expertise. He subtly cuts away on the story to focus on Sweeney Todd and nothing else.

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Where to Stop Where to Go

A weekly directory of the country's best accommodations

Welcome the Year of the Rat at the Renaissance Hotel

The Renaissance Makati City Hotel, Manila welcomes the Year of the Rat with much fanfare as the debate board refuses to good fortune and prosperity for the coming Chinese New Year.

As part of the celebration, guests are treated to eye-catching décor of antiques and period pieces from the renowned Liddle Artisan decorators in the lobby. As tradition dictates, specific colors such as Royal Gold, Fire Twins Pink Pearl Orange in coconuts, sugarcane and star flowers are available also at the lobby from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. at P888 per box. Furthermore, the well-loved Chinese 10 Course of Emperor Course will be sold at P579 per bundle.

The Chinese Festivities from Jan. Feb. 7, a sizzling Lion and Dragon Dance performance by the professional Ling Hian Athletic Association will begin on the lobby at 1 p.m. and will make its way through the hotel's corridors, with Emperor Count in control to entertain guests.

From the celebrations, Chinese executive chef Jackie Fong and his expert team offer exceptional Chinese New Year set menu good for 10 persons from Feb. 7 to 13 at Emperor Court, the hotel's fine Cantonese restaurant. The Prosperity Feasts and the Long Life Dragon set menus are priced at P15,888 and P18,888, respectively. An A la Carte Menu is also available, with traditional menu having corresponding blessing for a rewarding year ahead.

Menu prices quoted are inclusive of tax and local government taxes and subject to 10 percent service charge. For orders and reservations, call the Renaissance Makati City Hotel, Manila at 813-0888.

WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS SEAFOOD COCKTAILS AT THE HEARTH

Hors d'oeuvres at The Fireplace will never be the same again. Experience a slice of the world's boldest and most diverse flavors in your cocktail as Chef Jo offers a selection of glorious seafood cocktails. The toughest journey only the freshest tuna, prawns, shrimp, lobster and Jacket will fill your glass, combined with the tangy flavors of tomato or garlic sauce and other dressings, such as vinaigrette. Or, for extra thrill, Portale of the world's most famous delicacies and exotic cocktail cocktails, available exclusively at The Fireplace located at Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila. For inquiries and reservations, call 245-1234.

MALAY FOOD FEAST

Get your palate ready for an exquisite culinary journey courtesy of the gastronomical destination of choice South of the Metro, The Bakerman Manila. Introducing the hotel's new Chef de Cuisine Peter Teo, The Bakerman will feature a South-east Asian Food Festival from Jan. 14 to 19. The brilliant Chef Peter will prepare the scrumptious specialty dishes himself for your enjoyment which includes spicy Nasi Lemak, Nasi Goreng and delectable Malay Pancakes. Come to The Bakerman this unique Malay feast! For inquiries, call 771-0131.

RHYTHM AND BABES AND MOMATCH HEATS UP GAMBRINUS BAR

Intercontinental Manila's Gambrinus Bar starts the year with a bang as it features two hot bands for the months of January and February, the Babes and Momatch. Both composed of seasoned performers and musicians, these two bands will surely get patrons dancing in their seats as they render their versions of hits from the '60s up to the present. Catch Momatch on Jan. 11 and 19 and Rhythm and Babes on Jan. 26. Performance starts at 9:30 p.m. and there will be no cover charge or minimum consumption required. Other featured performers for the month of January are sultry sing-diva Jenni Ledesma (Mondays), Jed Mabuz (Tuesdays), Soul Uno (Wednesdays), Oliver Tirona (Thursdays), Manuel Cruz (Fridays) and Jennifer Rosales (Saturdays). Sexy Rhythm and Blues Revue by Mario Avila accompanied by Peter Jeffrey on piano from 8 p.m. to 12 midnight. Maestro Avila serenades guests every Sunday night with soothing piano tunes while saxophonist Boy Sena performs every Wednesday and Friday night from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. Gambrinus Bar offers a la carte dishes and live shows as well as a wide selection of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages. For reservations, call 752-7000.

Rhythm and Babes

Rediscover tea at Starbucks

Starbucks Indonesia have set another mission to "Rediscover the craft—to make a sensational moment with one of its most ancient leaves."

The new tea leaves join the popular Starbucks Green Tea Latte, offering customers a wider range of beverage choices.

"Tea has been enjoyed by customers in many countries throughout the world for its taste and renowned aesthetics," said Ding Boendoko, Starbucks marketing manager. "We want customers to rediscover the soothing feeling of drinking traditional black and decaffeinated teas. So, Starbucks searched the world for premium teas the flavour of which first complemented the creamy taste of steamed milk. The result is our Black Tea, Caramel Red Tea and Chai Tea Latte," Boendoko said.

Starbucks Black Tea Latte is a signature blend of five premium black teas sourced from Kenya, India and Sri Lanka which give the drink a bold and spicy flavour. Rich, rich and full bodied, this tea is best enjoyed with Starbucks Tiramisu Cookered Bar.

Starbucks Caramel Red Tea Latte is made from 100% caffeine-free Rooibos (Afrikaans for "red bush") discovered from a South African flowering shrub. Naturally caffeine free, rooibos was selected for its creamy caramel and cognac notes. It is mild, smooth flavor. This is paired with spicy notes of cinnamon, a hint of honey, delectably vanilla and creamy steamed milk. Starbucks Caramel Red Tea Latte is best complemented with Starbucks Pie Blueberry Cheesecake.

As for the highly popular Green Tea Latte, Starbucks uses a delicious blend of lightly oxidized premium Japanese matcha green tea, lightly sweetened with syrup and finished off with foamy fresh steamed milk.

The Starbucks Tea Lattes are available at any Starbucks outlet until supplies last.

A bigger splash at Hilton Cebu

SPEND a whole day of fun and excitement, from sun up to sun down at Hilton Cebu Resort and Spa with a Splash All day splash, day use package. For P2,000 nett, indulge in true tourist fodder at the Seaside Beach Club (Mondays to Saturdays) or Sandbox (Sundays), gorge breakfast, lunch and dinner by the pool, or bask by the beach and endlessly enjoy amusements at the games room and the gym and health center and then showcase prowess in swimming competitions.

Day Splash also entitles to 25 percent discount on massage treatments at The Spa. All outlets and activities including rides during from Scenic's.

Opened in October 2005, Hilton International's newly amended Stockholm Resort in Cebu, Philippines, has 240 rooms, a French Mediterranean inspired centre of fare, a unique business and MICE centre and facilities including outdoor dining outlets, a spa and spa locker service, meeting rooms and thoroughly modern and comfortable accommodations.

Situated in a private beach overlooking the emerald green waters of Mactan Island, the resort is Hilton's first foray in to the Philippines after an absence of 17 years from the archipelago.

For reservations and inquiries, call the Hilton Cebu Resort and Spa at 03(32) 492-7777.

It's a business world

Interview by James Gabelo

Drew Simcox gave Super an exclusive interview and talked about his passions, his reasons, and his belief that film is not about art, but rather business. Sit down, relax, and enjoy the show.

Who have inspired you to venture in to the world of film?

When I was young, I loved all the movies made by Alfred Hitchcock. I am inspired by Orson Welles, the man who said that "everything you need to know about filmmaking can be learned in one to three days," and Ted Serling, the amazing writer storyteller.

Who are your heroes?

Today, I have entrepreneurs...like Richard Branson (Virgin fame), Mark Cuban (Internet mogul), Bill Gates (Microsoft), and Steve Jobs (Apple)—who started with little to nothing, but built large empires by filling needs and creating businesses from scratch.

What about your favorite filmmakers?

I think John Sayles is the greatest Indie-spirited filmmaker; Roger Corman the greatest genre low-budget filmmaker, Clint Eastwood the most efficient studio director, and Al Abrams the greatest studio executive.

What is the biggest misconception of new hidden in the industry?

Without a doubt, it is the only fact that everyone approaches the film industry as if it is an art form. Filmmaking is a business. It's called show business. It is not called "show art." And, in my forthcoming Master's in "I Do Film School," I will teach the business of making a feature film on Day 1, then on Day 2, I will teach the business of selling a feature film.

For instance, what I mean by business is that when you make a feature film from beginning to end, no matter what the budget is, you will eventually write 10 bank checks, and I teach these 10 bank checks in the "Mr. Keys of Filmmaking." These 10 teach you how to market your film at film festivals, which are not free. I have you ever wondered what (federal) freebies/ changes to get into festivals? What does it cost to go to Cannes?

I know that it is necessary to have talent to succeed but with all my heart I truly do not know how to teach talent and I truly know of no instructor in the world who can really teach talent. You either have it or you don't.

You conduct a complete film course in two days. Are film schools around the world still relevant?

Film schools are relevant for 16 to 20-year-old children who need to learn how to socialize and make their looks. However, for adults, those two- to four-year $35,000-$200,000 theory-laden film schools are a massive waste of money and time. I promise that if you are a mature adult (20-60) and attend my "2-Day Film School" that I will give you all the information you need to launch your filmmaking career as either a writer, producer, or director. I say that because I have over 3,000 graduates who have instantly gone on to make feature films that have grossed over $1 billion. Boo—that's right—billion.

What where is the future of the global film industry?

Filmmaking, thanks to inexpensive digital video cameras, is no longer the rich man's game. Plus, thanks to the Internet, a feature film in the Philippines can be made for as little as $5,000-$50,000 and be distributed around the world relatively to the consumers, not gurus' huge profits from foreign licensing, DVDs, Cable, downloading and streaming. Hollywood will always make their Mega-Budget Movies, but more and more, the smaller no-budget, low-budget movies being made in the Philippines will be able to garner sales, revenues, and profits.

Will you ever stop teaching film?

Absolutely not—I love teaching filmmaking. I love having an audience drawing for information, especially in the film/entertainment industry called "Hollywood." I love explaining producing, writing, directing, financing, distributing, or whatever to anybody in actual terms that they can understand, and that's exactly how I teach it up. Where you find something in life that you are—first—good at, and—second—helps people, first, there is no desire to do anything else. I, on a monthly basis have agents, studios, and networks in Hollywood asking if I want to produce their movies or TV series, but I always pass because I do not want to stop teaching filmmaking. I will never ever stop teaching Filmmaking.

Simcox promises to create the next breed of successful Filipino filmmakers. The 2-Day Film School will be on Jan. 26-27 at the AIM Conference Center. To enroll, you can register online at www.filmmakingpros.com, or call TMNE CREATIVE at 911-965 3385/959.

BLOODY wolves man Depp

Sweeney makes a killing

From page 6

Some songs have the musical scenes make it to the film, some gorgeous and playful, because Burton had only one thing on his mind: telling the tale of the demon barber of Fleet Street. His quirky, off-beat sense of style remains a mainstay. Let those that is dirty and filthy and full of insane people driven by lust, greed, and vengeance.

All the actors, most notably Depp and Carter, do unbelievably committed performances. They never once play for your sympathy or for laughs. Instead, they are desperate people grasping for air in a world gone wrong; a world where justice is arbitrary and anything that is lovely and good and pure can easily be taken away. Much has been said about Depp's and Carter's lack of vocal prowess, but what they lack in technique, they more make up for in performances. They didn't try to be singers, instead they acted out each song, giving more weight to the meaning of each number.

Sweeney's Revenge

With the success of "Sweeney Todd," there are talks of adapting another of Sondheim's musicals into film. The time it's the comedy "Company," about a man who cannot commit to a relationship, his married friends, and his three girlfriends. Interestingly, musicals are no longer being considered such a risky affair and maybe we might actually see an actual resurgence of the genre which is a great thing. It is way that's Sweeney Todd's real revenge.

It's funny how films have always called stories from books but have not taken more from musical theatre. After all, "Dream Girls" and "Chicago" were mainstream successes and critically acclaimed. Of all of Sondheim's work, "Sweeney Todd" is one of the most difficult ones to sell, it a bloody and gruesome and dark and twisted, yet it is doing very well at the box office. So double kidney Depp and Tim Burton had a lot to do with it. More than anything, that pair is a brand and there will always be people lining up in theaters to see a movie with those two names on the marquee. Depp and Burton would do "High 2," the musical and people would still go to see it.

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For fusion, a licensed Access Energy facilitator, is in Manila this January to conduct a series of workshops.

The basic Bars Class (Jan. 11, 1:30-6:30 p.m. at G/F, 105, Grand, Levitt, 8000, Salcedo Village, Makati) teaches you about the 32 bars points in the head that correspond to life issues (such as creativity, power, money, sexuality, aging, and control). Learn how to activate these points and allow energy to flow, releasing the electrical charge that holds all the thoughts, ideas, and beliefs you have ever stored.

The next level is the Foundation Class (Jan. 22-25, 9:30a.m.-5:30 p.m.). Here you'll have a chance to clear some of the major implants and limitations that affect so many people. Learn to rid yourself of judgment and function from a place of ease and joy. You'll have a first hand experience of how functioning more consciously can change your life. You'll learn "verbal processing" to go to the point of creation and undo major limitations that you weren't even aware you had. There's also a dynamic hands-on process where you go through "cellular memory" to heal injured or damaged cells.

During Level One Class (Jan. 24 & 25, 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.) you'll continue to clear the limitations of your life using verbal processing, giving you more awareness around all the emphasis that limit your lives, bodies, relationships, careers, and psychic abilities. You'll also receive and give another hands-on body process called MYSSS, which can assist in erasing the blueprints of your body so it can start to function from a more conscious place. After these two days, you'll never be able to put your life back into the box of limitations. Many of the things which were holding you back will be gone after this class.

For more information on Access, log on to www.accessconsciousness.com, for inquiries and reservations call Rosanne at 0917.917.2588.

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SUPER RADAR

By Janine Cuenca-Dario and Sirit Juan

WED premiere of ridiculously flamboyant Las Vegas act **Foo Fighters Almost Free** (they overdramatize famous showbiz classics' nine-piece retro hits from the '80s, Imagine, Philip Oakey and Giorgio Moroder's "Together in Electric Dreams" song) with a stomping jazz feature? These are the songs that would either make you sing along or make you cringe. Either way, it's going to be fun. It's really something that's free admission to boot. The show starts at 8 p.m. at the Alabang Town Center Town Plaza.

SU the world is a little bit light this Jan. 20 at the **Light and Shade Photography Workshop**. Professional photographer Wesley Kitsch is a well-known photography enthusiasts into Parallax Studios to experience using different studio lighting set-ups. Only 15 slots available, the workshop is from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Unit 313 La Fuerza Plaza 1, 2241 Don Chino Roces Ave., Makati City. For inquiries and registration, kindly send your name, e-mail and contact number to (0917) 808 7462 and look for Kaiser Cruz, or e-mail lightandshadeworkshop@yahoo.com, kaiser.cruz@gmail.com, or log on to http://lightandshadeworkshop.multiply.com/

SINCE the fresh salty sea air in the company of surfer dudes and chicks with hardcore classic rock and roll tans from around the world at the Noh-Joel **Pinoy Classic Rock Festival in Surf Camp** in San Juan, La Union on Jan. 26-28. The event is happening with the 10th anniversary of the bi-annual (yes) long-haired Surfing Jam at the beach. The featured bands are a virtual who's-who of Pinoy rock 'n roll- Joey "Pepe" Smith, 6CL, Mechanimals, Wilson's Chairs, 3F, Charlie Baird, Roly Bond, and the Rake Hale Band (made up of veteran Filipino musicians from all over the world). For information, e-mail to hollywoodsecretrock.com or call (0923) 880 4287.

Prepare for **MAR** awesome modern rock, music and screen-shaking with thousands of fans when **My Chemical Romance** lands at The Pod Bandlaw Open Field for their live concert on Jan. 26. The show starts at 8 p.m., maybe enough time to grab a dinner or two at Krispy Kreme at High Street. Call 687 4181 loc. 420 and 145.

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+ January 21 (Monday)	DAY OFF	
+ January 22 (Tuesday)	1-show	(6PM)
+ January 23 (Wednesday)	1-show	(6PM)
+ January 24 (Thursday)	1-show	(6PM)
+ January 25 (Friday)	2-shows	(2PM / 6PM)
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IN THIS ISSUE
Emile Hirsch blazes his thespic trail /E3

SATURDAY Special

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Established actors rule Golden Globe awards

By Nestor U. Torre

THE TV-MOVIE WORLD IS ALL AGOG OVER young stars, who are more popular than ever—and, with reason, because the enormous talent audience is now made up mostly of young people. However, the recent Golden Globe awards have proven that, when it comes to awesome acting quality, veterans count.

The list of experienced thespians who won awards is topped by Julianne Moore, who surprised everyone by winning Best Actor honors for his performance in his very first musical, "Sweeney Todd."

Surprising

Depp's victory was surprising, because most people didn't even know he could sing! But, sing he does in "Sweeney Todd," enabling him to trounce musical stars with better singing voices, through sheer dint of his "wonderful" performance.

On the distaff side, the big winner was Julie Christie, for her painfully realistic portrayal of a woman stricken with Alzheimer's Disease in "Away From Her."

Movie fans remember Ms Christie as the lovely star of movies like "Dr. Zhivago," "Far From the Madding Crowd," "McCabe and Mrs. Miller" and "Shampoo."

Later, however, she pretty much dropped out of sight, so her triumph in her comeback movies is a most welcome reminder—from romance lead to gritty character actress.

We're also delighted that Daniel Day-Lewis has stamped still more the Globe's finer Actor-Drama award. It's been decades since the acclaimed thespian came on strong in "My Left Foot," but Mr. Lewis still comes into the then young actor's magically "twisted" portrayal of an Irish artist born with cerebral palsy in Jim Sheridan's brilliant movie.

After "My Left Foot," Day-Lewis continued to distinguish himself by way of strong roles in films like "In the Name of the Father," "The Age of Innocence" and "The Last of the Mohicans."

But, his award-winning performance in "There Will Be Blood" is still regarded as a stretch for him, because he plays that "dark" role of a cold-blooded oil tycoon.

Even the winners of supporting

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GALLERIA

1 SWEENEY TODD + TBA
2 ALVIN and the CHIPMUNKS
3 I COULD NEVER BE YOUR WOMAN
4 THE HEARTBREAK KID
5 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
6 DRAGON WAR
7 I AM LEGEND
8 InstaEmo: SIKIL
9 DESPERADAS
10 BAKAL BAKALI SAKLOLO

Dov Simens'
2-Day Film School™
in Manila

ERMITA

1 DRAGON WAR
2 BEE MOVIE
3 DESPERADAS
4 BAKAL BAKALI SAKLOLO
5 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
6 I AM LEGEND
7 I COULD NEVER BE YOUR WOMAN
8 THE HEARTBREAK KID
9 ALVIN and the CHIPMUNKS
10 SWEENEY TODD

METRO EAST

1 SWEENEY TODD
2 ALVIN and the CHIPMUNKS
3 BAKAL BAKALI SAKLOLO
4 I COULD NEVER BE YOUR WOMAN
5 I AM LEGEND
6 THE HEARTBREAK KID
7 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
8 DESPERADAS

NOVALICHES

1 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
2 THE HEARTBREAK KID
3 BAKAL BAKALI SAKLOLO
4 DESPERADAS
5 DRAGON WAR
6 I AM LEGEND
7 ALVIN and the CHIPMUNKS
8 SWEENEY TODD

PIONEER

1 SWEENEY TODD
2 NATIONAL TREASURE 2/HEARTBREAK KID
3 ALVIN and the CHIPMUNKS
4 DRAGON WAR

STA. ROSA

1 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
2 SWEENEY TODD
3 I AM LEGEND
4 DESPERADAS
5 BAKAL BAKALI SAKLOLO

LIPA

1 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
2 I AM LEGEND
3 DESPERADAS
4 NATIN ng SAUDI
5 DEATH PROOF

DASMARIÑAS

1 DESPERADAS
2 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
3 I AM LEGEND
4 ALVIN and the CHIPMUNKS
5 SWEENEY TODD

IMUS

1 THE HEARTBREAK KID
2 I AM LEGEND
3 DESPERADAS
4 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
5 SWEENEY TODD
6 ALVIN and the CHIPMUNKS

ANGELES

1 SWEENEY TODD
2 DESPERADAS
3 ALVIN and the CHIPMUNKS
4 NATIONAL TREASURE 2

TARLAC

1 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
2 ENTER: KAMISOTE 4
3 BAKAL BAKALI SAKLOLO

STARMILLS

1 SWEENEY TODD
2 DESPERADAS
3 BAKAL BAKALI SAKLOLO
4 ALVIN and the CHIPMUNKS
5 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
6 I AM LEGEND

BACOLOD

1 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
2 I AM LEGEND
3 BEE MOVIE / ELIZABETH: GOLDEN AGE
4 DESPERADAS
5 ANAK ng KUMADRON
6 BAKAL BAKALI SAKLOLO

ILOILO

1 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
2 ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE
3 DEATH PROOF
4 I AM LEGEND
5 DESPERADAS
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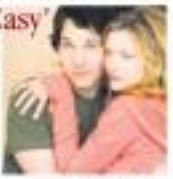

MONTAGE

'I Could Never Be Your Woman'

Michelle Pfeiffer plays a 40-year-old single mother who falls for a younger man in her new movie, "I Could Never Be Your Woman." She

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RUDD AND PFEIFFER Toplist May September rom-coms.

Opens against her feelings, but the young Avatar (Paul Rudd) has other ideas.

To complicate things further, she has to deal with problems at work, an ex-husband who's having a child with a younger woman, and her own pubescent daughter's raging hormones. It's enough to make a mature woman—or pitcher!

'Art2Art'

Lisa Macuja's guest on her "Art2Art" radio program last Jan. 13 was popular walking tour guide, Carlos Celdran. Carlos took Lisa on a virtual tour of the most startling secret places and significant landmarks in Manila. "Art2Art" is produced by the Manila Broadcasting Company and airs every Sunday at 5:00 p.m. on 828.

'Voice of A Star'

Every Thursday of January, Starmall Edsa is holding an inter-school singing contest, "Voice of A Star," with big prizes at stake. The fifth is open to high school and college students from 15 to 25 years old. Call 710-1886.

At Metropolis (San Alabang, Bonbon Lanzones province) has offices on Jan. 27.

Venus Williams

Reigning Wimbledon champ Venus Williams will be interviewed by Jorge Rios on DWIZ's "Talk Arts" at 8:30 a.m. today, and 8:30 a.m. and 10 p.m. tomorrow. The untold conversation, delves into her upbringing, tennis training, and her relationship with sister Serena.

Cora Ramos

Cora Ramos, dubbed "Big Big Young Musicwise" in the '50s, sings on "Concert at the Park" at Rizal Park at 5 p.m. tomorrow. Joining her are her grandchildren, Jackielyn Torres and John Advincula, and the Breakdown Band.

Movies or Cinemas

Today at 7 p.m., "The Duke of Burgundy" tomorrow at 7 p.m., "Sea of Love." Jan. 21 at 11 p.m., "Chinatown." Jan. 22 at 7 a.m., "End of Silence." Jan. 23 at 7 p.m., "Midway." Jan. 24 at 7 a.m., "Bonnie and Clyde." Jan. 26 at 7 a.m., "The Ten Commandments."

Confucius

From page 64

labor of others; criminal to commit errors despite advice, and refusal to change bad ideas despite warnings.

Generosity, sincerity, earnestness and kindness assist one toward

Emile Hirsch blazes his thespic trail

By Mester U. Torre

IN THE '50s AND '60s, HOLLYwood was rocked by the emergence of unusually gifted young actors like Marlon Brando, James Dean and Montgomery Clift. Much later, viewers were blown away by the compelling performances of other young thespians like Daniel Day Lewis, Sean Penn and Russell Crowe.

Stellar bid

What about the current film scene? Is there any new actor out there who's blazing his/her own thespic trail to the movie firmament? Scores of avid/e movies are making their stellar bid this year, but only a few of them venture the exceptional talent, utmost temperament and dedication required for coming up with truly memorable big screen performances.

Facing those gifted runners in 2008 is Emile Hirsch. Only 22 years old, he's starring in "Into the Wild," a new making vehicle

HIRSCH. Plays the protagonist in Sean Penn's "Into the Wild."

if ever there was one.

In the intense and tempting adventure drama, Hirsch's character is so vividly here on making himself one with nature that he obliterates his own identity and creates a new one as he leaves his old life behind and disappears, as the movie's title puts it, "into the wild."

Hirsch's acting coup is made even more special by the fact that "Into the Wild" is directed by Sean Penn, an iconic actor in his own right. The fact that a champion at gifted as Penn chose Hirsch to star in his film makes Emile the young actor of choice this season.

What made Penn tap Hirsch, out of hundreds of aspirants, to star in "Into the Wild"? Penn says he was impressed with Emile's edge portrayal of a skateboard racer in the 2005 film, "Lords of Dogtown."

After meeting Hirsch, Penn says even more, taken by the young actor when he found out that his new pet was willing, ready and able to do absolutely anything to make his character come across believably and vividly on the screen.

That meant shooting every day for eight long months in 34 locations all over the United States, and doing all of his risky stunts himself! Now, that takes guts—as Emile Hirsch is duly entitled to the glory he's basking in now that "Into the Wild" has been released.

Credits

Hirsch's other movie credits include "The Air We Breathe," "Alpha Dog," "Imaginary Heroes," "The Girl Next Door," "The Mudge Boy," "The Emperor's Club," "The Dangerous Lives of Altar Boys" and "Wild Hit."

The young actor has also had television exposure on TV shows like "9/11," "NYPD Blue," "Profiler," "The Pretender," "Two of a Kind" and "Get Real" from this front."

Having paid his dues as a juvenile and teen actor, Hirsch is good and ready to make his mark as a young adult star in this decade's remaining years. He's already tapped to play the role role in "Speed Racer" this year, and to star in "MGK" in 2009. For Emile Hirsch, the sky's the limit!

Too much, too soon

By Bebe Cervantes

DIANA BARRYMORE, A CHIP off John Barrymore's old block, was an attractive blonde who clearly had great acting genes stunning in her own right. However, the daughter of Thunderbird's "The Great Profile couldn't see eye to eye with the camera that some her way too early and too soon. She ended up an alcoholic and an emotional wreck.

Other Hollywood icons like Judy Garland, Marilyn Monroe and Carole Lombe tragically succumbed to ending their melodramatic lives despite global adulation.

The best legs

Carole Landis, a small-town girl from Wisconsin, was touted to have "the best legs in town." However, despite a flourishing career, she committed hilarious.

The troubled beauty fell in love with Rex Harrison, who was then already married to Lilliman Impot, Lili Palmer. As a result of this unexplained love, Landis committed suicide at age 29.

Big-screen adaptation

Stockbroker Anne Seberg won the coveted role of Jo Jean in Otto Preminger's big-screen adaptation of the George Bernard Shaw play, but the film was both a critical and commercial flop.

Seberg's innocent, wide-eyed beauty served her better in her next film, "Bonjour Tristesse." Frame hardened, and the actress soon found

LANDIS. Was a personal beauty contestant who married at age 15.

success in films like "Breathless" and "Lilith."

Seberg was typecast as a young beauty with "carnal-like innocence," although she was really an intelligent woman who got involved in political causes. The fragile beauty suffered a number of nervous breakdowns. She appeared opposite Peter Sellers in "The Mouse That Roared" before the 39-year-old was committed suicide.

Stunning actress

Dorothy Dandridge was one of the first African-American actresses to attain star status in the 1940s. She was also the first black woman to be nominated for the Best Actress Oscar.

Then, the actress had all her savings in a get-rich-quick scam that led to her emotional deterioration and eventual suicide at age 42. Ironically, Dandridge was scheduled for a comeback performance in New York's Basin Street Blues when she was found dead from an overdose of barbiturates. It was a sad but familiar ending.

Established. . .

From page E1

player awards were relative newcomer Cate Blanchett in "The Aviator" and Jamie Foxx in "Ray." Blanchett is a member of the awardees for interview, like David Seaborne in "Collaboration," Jim Broadbent in "Longford," Queen Latifah in "Life Support" and Laurence Fishburne in "Thurgood."

Why do experienced players take the route on "quality" TV and movie screens? Because film awards prizes look for complex, challenging characters that are difficult to portray, and it takes years to develop the skills required to pull off those compelling portrayals with deceptive ease.

They do they separate the greats from the chaff in their consuming search for the definitive prize of excellence in cinema?

Depp does . . .

From page E2

world enrolled in gothic gloss and cruel beauty. In his clever hands, Sondheim's spook, operatized music, acerbic wit and adult humor becomes an outlandish, expressive medium used to "explain" characters motivation—without compromising the power of Sondheim's disembodied voices and dissonant musical beauty.

Depp's voice may not be suited for the stage but, on the silver screen, his full-bodied baritone makes Sweeney Todd's unfortunate fate and ritualistic craving for vengeance chords with life and terror.

If you loved Adam Blackmore's marvelous film adaptation of "Hairspray" for its verve and show-stopping energy, "Sweeney Todd" is at the other end of the musical spectrum—its gore and violence will remind viewers that the world is no playground. And that the film's protagonist is a man who doesn't seek redemption, he just wants retribution!

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A range of activities will be staged at the Podium Lounge from 21-27 January to kick off the promotion. Learn more about Singapore Airlines A380 with a walk-through exhibit and film screenings, plus fun and games for young travelers. Explore singaporeair.com to see how easy to do your own online check-in, seat selection, and booking. Buy return tickets to Sydney and earn double KrisFlyer bonus miles, and you could be travelling again for two to Singapore or any of the Airline's Southeast Asian destinations. Tickets to other Australian destinations will also earn 100% KrisFlyer bonus miles. More KrisFlyer bonus miles are in store for children aged 11 and below.

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NOW SHOWING

Depp does Sondheim proud in 'Sweeney Todd'

By Rito P. Asido

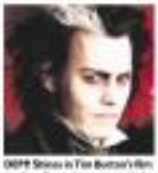
"Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street"

D: Tim Burton

S: Johnny Depp, Helena Bonham Carter, Alan Rickman and Sacha Baron Cohen

HOW FAR WOULD YOU GO TO avenge the loss of your family? For Sweeney Todd, the answer is easy: Till the last drop of his blood—literally!

With "Sweeney Todd," this year's worthy recipient of the Golden Globes' Best Picture in a Comedy/Musical, visionary director Tim Burton expands his feature the movie-musical genre—which began with 2005's acclaimed animated gothic romance, "Corpse Bride"—and delivers a brilliantly realized albeit compressed big-screen adaptation of Stephen Sondheim and Hugh Wheeler's popular 1979 stage musical. The darkly brooding, unapologetically bloody musical wouldn't have fallen into better hands!



Depp Shines in Tim Burton's film version of popular stage musical.

Set in 19th century England, the production follows the story of barber, Benjamin Barker (Depp) as tragic perfection by Johnny Depp, who also won Best Actor in a Musical/Comedy at the Globes), who, with the help of young sailor, Anthony Hope (Jamie Campbell Bower), returns to London 15 years after he's banished on Australia by evil Judge Turpin (Alan Rickman) for crimes he didn't commit.

During the barber's exile Lovett (Helena Bonham Carter) runs Mrs. Lovett's dilapidated pie shop, where he lives and kills his victims, whom he considers "unimportant" of London's corrupt aristocracy (among them arch rival, Signor Adolfo Pirelli, played with over-the-top gusto by Sacha Baron Cohen)—and makes them the "main ingredient" of Mrs. Lovett's most scrumptious meat pies!

Burton creates a masterfully (more on page 11)

Confucius says

SET OFF IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION this year with words of wisdom from Chinese philosopher, Confucius:

People are obedient to the rules when punishment rules's rightness and obedience evil.

He who governs by example is like the Pole Star, which keeps its place while other stars revolve around it.

He who is renewed by slumber is intelligent.

When good is in danger, only a coward would not defend it.

A person who has his heart set on doing good will always be free from evil.

A gentleman practices what he preaches before he preaches what he practices.

Great qualities

Isn't it wonderful to see what you learn into practice? What's a gentleman be offended if others fail to notice his great qualities?

Lotus Pond

R. Valencia and S. Bernardo

A gentleman would rescue a man trapped in a well, but he wouldn't jump in it...he's not perfect, but he's not stupid, either.

A gentleman will help others in need and stay out of trouble. A petty man will do the opposite.

It's a disgrace for a gentleman's words to be greater than his deeds.

A great man is hard on himself. A small man is hard on others.

These are the four types of abuses: A man's desire is exceed in order to make himself heroes; taking credit for the (CONFUCIUS 11)

SATURDAY Special

Kirsten Dunst debuts as filmmaker at Sundance festival

HAMILL. Costars with Ralph Fiennes in "In Bruges."

PARK CITY, UTAH—ME ranks the presence of Filipino filmmakers at this year's Sundance Film Festival, which opened with "In Bruges," an action-comedy starring Colin Farrell, Ralph Fiennes and Brendan Gleeson.

Interestingly, there's a film that bears the name of fast-rising Quentin Tarantino, Larry Bird drivers and stars in "Quentin Tarantino Presents Hell Ride." Dennis Hopper and Michael Madsen also star. Will Quentin wear his Tejano's hairdo in the minus chill of this snow-covered mountain town? Hunger.

In the absence of Filipino filmmakers this year, we're glad to note that Asians or Asian Americans are nevertheless represented. Ann U. Gallery, publicist of foreclosure, sent us a list of films with Asian/Asian-American affiliations:

Complicated life

"Death to Love" by Sean Wang-Asian American Simone Kai makes her film debut in this feature about a self-assured, but neurotic 40-year-old bachelor who attempts to make sense of his complicated life in the shadow of his mother's controversial camp experiences. Cast includes Josh Lucas, Jacqueline Bisset, Adam Brody and Lukas Haas.

"Dinner with the President" by Gabbie Stowar and Sachidhanam Ann Sachidhanam. From interviews and audiences with religious leaders to dinner with the President of Pakistan, the film tackles issues ranging from politics to women's rights.

"The Dreamers" by Kenneth Bi features Tony Leung and Jaycee Chan playing a young man who's transformed from a reckless young gangster into a teacher, all through the inspiration of Tai drumming.

"Gas Toppers" by Kenneth Yu, Kit Hung is a short animation about climate change.

"Sweethearts" by Chiao Moo-Young and Glenn Doherty dramatizes a single parent's relationship with his teenage daughter on the day she brings home her new boyfriend.

On the verge of extinction

"The Longmire" by Seth Rosner, Daniel A. Miller, Jeremy Newberg, ...

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Rahwa U. Saiyadin

...ardillous, linguists who document languages on the verge of extinction.

"The Betrayal" by Ellen Kuras and Thavisouk Phrasavath follows the epic story of a family forced to emigrate from Laos, silent chaos of the secret air war waged by the US during the Vietnam War years.

"Project" by Kazuya Yamada: A Japanese photojournalist encounters Project, a young girl who introduces him to the Mongolian plains.

"Seven Intellectuals in Restless Storm, Parts 4 and 5" by Ying Fusheng are the artist's recently completed films in his celebrated series, based on the history of seven intellectuals in the ancient Chinese text and Jin Dynasties.

"Smart People" by Noam Murro and Mark Jude Poirier tells the tale of a self-absorbed literature professor who alienates his son and turns his daughter into an overachieving, friendless teen. Cast includes Dennis Quaid, Sarah Jessica Parker, Thomas Haden Church and Ellen Page.

Employment

"Up the Yangtze" by Yung-Chang chronicles the story of young men and women who take up employment on a cruise ship, where they confront rising waters and a radically changing China.

In "Hanahaki" by Li Ying, cosmetic surgeons abound in Japanese office-clad before the deceased at the legendary Tanakami shrine, where rituals used to kill Chinese soldiers were famously forged.

The Short Film category includes Joerg Staitz's "Signal 30/8"; Tatsuhiko Sukamoto and Karen Mitchell's "Pilgrimage"; Julie Keane's "Sunlit," and "Kim Sterelny's "Salim/Baba."

Other notable entries this year: Kirsten Dunst's "Wisconsin," in her directing debut, "Spider Man's" girl tackles the tale of a family encountering a ghost in their new house, with Winona Ryder leading the cast.

"Sunshine Cleaning" by Christine Jeffs, it stars Amy Adams and her sister (Emily Blunt) start an unusual business: a biohazard waste removal service. Adams reportedly eclipses her fine performances in "Junebug" and "Enchanted."

Documentary

"Where in the World is Osama Bin Laden?" by Morgan Spurlock is a documentary that chronicles the search for the al-Qaeda head in the Middle East.

"Phoebe in Wonderland" by Daniel Barnz is about a rebellious little girl, played by Elle Fanning (Dakota's sister), who finds solace in her unconventional drama teacher.

"The Guitar" by Amy Redford: Robert Redford's daughter makes her directorial debut in a film about a musician who spends her final days learning to play the electric guitar.

"U2 3D" by Catherine Owens and Mark Pellington is a documentary that enables viewers to experience U2's "Vertigo" concert in 3D.

"What Just Happened?" by Barry Levinson: it is eerie starring Robert De Niro as a down-and-out Hollywood producer.

"Assassination of a High School President" by Brett Simon is about a rookie journalist for the school paper who unravels a mysterious plot involving the class president, drugs, and some nobler war issues. Cast includes Bruce Thompson and Reece Noble.

Aging airport janitor

"Captain Abu Raed" by Amin Matalqa is about an aging airport janitor who is mistaken for an airline pilot by poor neighborhood children. It weaves fantastical stories to offer hope for a sad, and sometimes unchangeable, reality.

"The Messy Conclusion" by Michael Kramer, who directs for the first time, tells the story of a young woman (Kelly Macdonald) who flees from an abusive marriage and sets off to start a new life. When she finds herself co-inverting witness to a murder, she scrambles to negotiate friendship with a depressed hit man (Kramer).

"Inside" by Anna Boden and Ryan Fleck is a spooky drama about a Destitution Istanbul star who is injured by the Kenny Connor film, "Field of Dreams."

"The Adventures of Raven & Mothers: The Rest" is an animated

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ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS
OPENS JAN. 16

PG-13
NOW SHOWING
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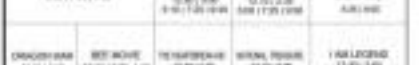
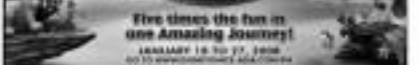
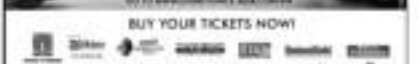
JASON STATHAM
AMANDA BROOKS
ROBERT FORSTER
D-WAR
DOOMSDAY WAR HAS BEGUN!



Kirsten Dunst debuts as filmmaker...

From page F1

buddy-comedy Dot chronicles the adventures of Baxter and McGuire—who just happen to be canine.

Other promising titles: Art Gold's "Adventures of Power"; Clark Gregg's "Choke"; Shaun de Michell and Isabel Vega's "The Cosmo"; Steven Schachter's "The Soul"; Marianna Palka's "Good Dick"; Sean McGinly's "The Great Buck Howard"; Andrew Fleming's "Hamlet 2"; Geoff Haley's "The Last Word"; Stacy Peralta's "Made in America"; Israel Jacob's "Women's Blue"; Dawson Thurber's "The Mysteries of Pittsburgh"; Alan Ball's "Towelhead," and Jonathan Levine's "The Wackness."

E-mail reporter Sid Holmes@hotmail.com, and read his blog, "The Napolo Report," on www.inquirer.com/napoloreport.

NOW SHOWING

MMTA MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

OPENS SOONEST

STREET SMART

Mandy Navarrete

TO MARK THE 25TH anniversary of Edgar Allan and business partner Rose Tiang-co, the duo recently reunited for lavish fashion show, "Films of Noir," at Glorietta 3, 50-gown couture collection. The event was attended by top fashion designers like Ben Farolan, Pilar Pilapil, Cherie Gil, Christian Espiritu, Danny Franco and Mike Ilusorio with Dr. Manilla Bautista as special guest.

Edgar has a fine arts degree from the University of Santo Tomas, and honed his skills in pattern and draping under Nicky Gelango. Rose has a bachelor's degree in business administration from UP, and studied Fashion Merchandising at Otis Parsons.

Icons

In 2005, Edgar and Rose reinvented themselves in the fashion market by pulling up The Edgar Allan Boutique at Rockwell—with no less than fashion icons, Chito Madrigal, Elvira Manalaysay and Cherie Gil gracing the opening. The pair initially focused on wedding and special occasion gowns.

To celebrate their 25th year, they have published the coffee-table book, "Edgar Allan, 25 Years in Fashion," which includes pictures taken since the 1980s, as well as sketches used for the 25th anniversary show.

The celebration also includes a photo exhibit at Glorietta and in Nova de Alaya at the Philippine Center in New York on May.

Join the Balintawak Photo Exhibit from Atlocan to Alay Arcenarium will be held today, 3 p.m. at rm. 227, 2/F Business Plaza 219 Leviste Corner, Makati. Call 899-1787 or e-mail nanay-navarrete@yahoo.com.

AT THE CINEMAS

GLOBUSTER 1	1 NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS	2 I AM LEGEND	3 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS	4 DRAGON WAR
GLOBUSTER 4	1 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS	2 NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS	3P SWEENEY TODD	
	4 D-WAR	5 I COULD NEVER BE YOUR WOMAN	6 THE HEARTBREAK KID	7 I AM LEGEND
GREENBELT 1	1 SWEENEY TODD	2 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS		
GREENBELT 3	1P BEVERLY HILLS: BOOK OF SECRETS	2P ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS		
	3 SWEENEY TODD	4 THE HEARTBREAK KID	5 I AM LEGEND	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1P ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS	2 I AM LEGEND		
	3 NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS	4 SWEENEY TODD	5 THE HEARTBREAK KID	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 THE HEARTBREAK KID	2 SWEENEY TODD	3 NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS	4 I AM LEGEND
MARKET! MARKET!	1 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS	2 THE HEARTBREAK KID		
	3 SWEENEY TODD	4 I AM LEGEND	5 NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS	
TRINOMA	1 I COULD NEVER BE YOUR WOMAN	2 THE HEARTBREAK KID	3 NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS	4 SWEENEY TODD
	5 ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS	6 D-WAR	7P I AM LEGEND	

AT THE MALLS

Ayala Malls

Glorietta — Photocontest Manila — January 18 to February 9

Greenbelt — WELCOME 2008 SALE — January 11 to February 3

Alabang Town Center — Lolas' Sale — January 19 & 20, Activity Center

Ayala Center Cebu — Closing Celebration — January 19 & 20, Activity Center

Market! Market! — Alvin & The Chipmunks Live at Market! Market! — January 19 & 20, 1:30pm, 3:45pm & 6:00pm, Activity Center

Greenbelt Theaters presents Tuklasan ang Sining — January 11 to 31, 2007 — For inquiries, pls. call 757-0710 or visit www.repertory.philippines.com

Ayala Museum — Museum of Philippine Art — Paintings by Juan Luna, Fernando Amorsolo, and Botong Francisco — For more info, pls. call 759-7510 to 20 loc. 214 or email museum_inquiries@yahoo.com.ph

Tsi Nanna — WELCOME 2008 SALE — January 11 to February 3

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